

D U P L E I X

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BY

COLONEL JOHN BIDDULPH

AUTHOR OF

"THE NINETEENTH AND THEIR TIMES

"THE PIRATES OF MALABAR AND ENGLISHWOMAN IN INDIA

"STRINGER LAWRENCE"...

"He was known often to say that he would reduce the English settlements of Calcutta and Madras to their original state of fishing towns."—ORME

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## PREFACE

COLONEL MALLESON, in the Preface to his *History of the French in India*, mentions his indebtedness to an article on Dupleix in the *National Review* for 1862, by an anonymous writer, who has since been identified under the name of Cartwright. The article is a bit of special pleading, admittedly written for the purpose of elevating Dupleix to a higher pedestal than that on which his own countrymen had placed him. The necessarily brief sketch of his career is written with such strong bias against the Directors of the French East India Company, and is marred by such suppression and distortion of important facts as to render it worthless as a contribution to history. It has, however, gained importance by having furnished the foundation on which Malleson in England and Hamont in France have built up a legendary Dupleix who is an exaggerated portrait of the real man as

he was known to his contemporaries. To M. Cultru, in his work, *Dupleix, ses plans politiques, sa disgrâce*, Paris, 1901, with its copious extracts from the records of the Compagnie des Indes, and from Dupleix's own letters and dispatches, the world is indebted for the clearing away of the inventions that have gathered round Dupleix's name, and for a careful analysis of the causes that led to his fall. The story that within three years of his arrival in India, Dupleix formed the plans for founding a French empire in India, which he, many years later, attempted to carry out, can no longer be accepted. It is to be traced back to a few words in the Abbé Raynal's work on the East and West Indies (Geneva, 1780), and has been developed to its fullest extent by Hamont. M. Cultru shows conclusively from Dupleix's own writings in 1753 how entirely mythical is the story. So averse was Dupleix from the acquisition of territory, even after assuming the Governorship of Pondicherry, that he condemned it in the case of Karikal. "M. Dumas commence à penser comme vous de Karikal," wrote one of the Directors to

Dupleix, in 1746. "Il me disait l'autre jour qu'il chercherait un moyen pour en débarrasser la Compagnie." The story of Dupleix's visit to Chandernagore, in 1742, is shown to be a pure myth. On the face of it nothing could have been more improbable than that an official of the Delhi Emperor should have done homage to him, when the relative positions of the Empire and of European traders, at that date, are taken into account, and the journey itself would have been a matter of months.

The causes of Dupleix's fall were his insubordination, his studied silence as to what was going on in India, his failure to contribute to the Company's revenues, and the Company's insolvency. For, in spite of the great acquisitions of territory made by him, between 1749 and 1753, no financial benefit accrued to the Company. The Directors in Paris were in no condition to do more than they did for him. Ever since the failure of Law's Mississippi scheme the *Compagnie des Indes* had been in financial difficulties. Kept in strict tutelage by royal Commissioners, mixed up in business that had nothing to do with Eastern trade,

and paying dividends that it had not earned, it was only kept afloat by the proceeds arising from lotteries and from its monopoly of the sale of tobacco in France, and had practically been insolvent since 1745. The accounts of the Company's finances, given in considerable detail by Raynal and Cultru, show how fatal to both parties was the financial connection between the State and the *Compagnie des Indes*. According to Voltaire, the *Compagnie des Indes*, during sixty years, failed to realise a single dividend from the sale of merchandise. In the last forty years of its existence it was supplied from the State treasury with the prodigious sum of three hundred and sixty-six million livres, without the shareholders reaping any benefit.

Stripped of all inventions and exaggerations, Dupleix still remains an interesting and striking figure. To him belongs the distinction of first bringing India within the scope of European politics. In the general break-up of the Moghul Empire the intrusion of the European may be said to have been inevitable: the real issue for decision was whether France or England was to win

the prize. Able men use opportunities rather than create them, and, after the first step, Dupleix played the game with a boldness, success, and dexterity that could only have been exhibited by a man of great powers. But, before long, boldness became recklessness, and he allowed the moment to pass when, by yielding an unimportant point, he might have retained the substantial gains he had acquired. At the time of his recall all chance of success had disappeared, though to the end of his life he failed to perceive this : and Colonel Malleson has shared the illusions in this respect that Dupleix has dwelt on at such length in his *Mémoire contre la Compagnie*. The very important point is ignored, that, in 1754, the schemes of Dupleix could have been prosecuted only at the cost of war with England : and France was not then prepared to draw the sword.

The espousal of the English Company's quarrel by the King's Government was an event of far-reaching importance, and the dispatch of Watson's squadron with the 39th Regiment, to the East, due solely to the attempts of Dupleix to establish a

French empire in India, decided the course of our Indian history.

The war on the Coromandel coast is a remarkable chapter in the history of the making of our Colonial empire in the eighteenth century. For over four years the English and French trading companies waged war with each other as auxiliaries of native princes; though they abstained from direct attack on each other's settlements. The war extended over a large tract of country not belonging to either of them: it was marked by marches, sieges, and a number of hard-fought battles: it was fought without let or hindrance from any native power jealous of its sovereign rights: it was fed periodically with reinforcements from England and France, without any notice being taken by the governments of those countries which were at peace; and their interference, when at last invoked, was exerted to restoring so far as was possible the state of affairs existing before the war began. To the English on the spot, the conclusion of the war appeared at the time lame and impotent. The true results were seen when the contest broke out again in



the Seven Years' War, and England put forth her strength in earnest. It was then apparent that the back of French prestige in India had been broken by Lawrence and Clive, and Lally's defeat was a foregone conclusion. The victories of Forde in the Northern Circars and of Coote at Wandewash, followed by the surrender of Pondicherry, only put the final seal to the victories won at Bahoor and under the walls of Trichinopoly.

It has not been thought necessary here to dwell on the details of the fighting between the French and English troops. Only the more important events have been alluded to so far as was required by the narrative. Orme must always remain the real historian of the war, though the details on the French side have been dealt with at greater length by Malleson. Orme was in Bengal till the end of 1752, and was appointed a Member of the Madras Council soon after Dupleix's recall. He was therefore in close contact, at different times, with all the principal actors on the English side. It is impossible to follow in his footsteps and to look through the great mass of his

MSS., now at the India Office, without recognising the extraordinary diligence with which he collected information at first hand concerning every event great or small that he had not himself witnessed. Though tedious, diffuse, and written without any sense of perspective or imagination, his work is a most valuable storehouse of facts.

Students of the period here treated of are apt to be puzzled by discrepancies between the French and English dates. The French revision of the calendar took place in the sixteenth century: the English correction dates from 3rd September 1752, when the contest between the French and English Companies was at its height. The correction was carried out in India on the same day as in England. Up to the 3rd September 1752 dates are given according to both styles, when necessary, but not afterwards.

In the following pages I have drawn freely on M. Cultru's work, and on the East India Company's records.

# DUPLEIX

## I

JOSEPH FRANÇOIS DUPLEIX was born at Landrecies on the 1st January 1697. His father, François Dupleix, was farmer-general of the provincial taxes, and, some twenty years later, farmer of the tobacco revenue, of which the *Compagnie des Indes* held the monopoly. His mother was Anne Louise de Massac. Joseph François was their second son: the elder, Dupleix de Bacquencourt, succeeding his father in the Company's service, and becoming farmer-general about 1736. They had also a daughter, Anne, who married a Breton gentleman, Desnos de Kerjean. At the age of eighteen Joseph François made a voyage to India. On his return he spent three years in France, at Nantes, Saint Malo, and Dax, but it is not

known how he was employed.<sup>1</sup> During this time, owing to some youthful escapade, he fell into disfavour with his father, who, apparently to get rid of him, used his interest to get him an appointment in India. Both in England and France, India was regarded as the refuge of restless spirits in those days. By his father's interest he was appointed sixth Member of Council at Pondicherry, but, owing to certain administrative changes, he received the appointment of first Member of Council and Commissary General of troops before embarkation. He sailed for India in the *Atalanta*, 29th June 1721. On board the same ship with him was Dulivier, the Company's Chief Commissioner at Surat. Dulivier died during the voyage. Before his death he made a loan of 400 pagodas<sup>2</sup> to young Dupleix, with whose abilities he was much struck.

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix in his *Mémoire* says that he made *several* voyages to America and the Indies. M. Cultru says that he made a single voyage only, from St. Malo, in 1715. In a letter written to his brother from Chandernagore, in 1737, Dupleix stated that from the year 1713 he had been dependent on his father for only two years and a half.

<sup>2</sup> The pagoda was a gold coin, fluctuating in value according to the mint of issue. For general purposes its value was about seven shillings and sixpence.

The money was intended for Dupleix to use in the private trade followed by the Company's employés, and was the foundation of the fortune he afterwards acquired by trading. Dupleix landed at Pondicherry on 16th August 1722, after a voyage that lasted fourteen months. On arrival, he learned that the Governor, M. de la Prévotière, had died ten months before, and, for a time, it seemed that Dupleix would at once step into the governorship in virtue of his appointment as first Councillor. Since the Governor's death, Lenoir, the first Member of the Council, had acted as Governor. On the dispatches, that had come by the same vessel, being opened, it was found that Lenoir had been ordered to proceed to Surat, and that Dupleix had been nominated next in succession to de Lorme, to whom the vacant governorship would naturally fall, pending the arrival of orders from France. De Lorme refused to take up the appointment, and the Council decided to retain Lenoir as Governor, so Dupleix began his career as first Councillor, on a salary of 2500 livres. Three weeks later, further letters from Paris brought

orders for Duplex to proceed to Masulipatam as a factor, on a reduced salary of 900 livres. Dumas, the *procureur général*, was dismissed the service for disobedience of orders two years previously. Lenoir and the Council refused to act on these instructions: they were aggrieved at the tone of the dispatches. Duplex, instead of being sent to Masulipatam, was retained in the Council, but relegated to the fourth rank on a reduced salary.<sup>1</sup> After some delay Dumas embarked for France, but got no farther than Bourbon, where he was detained, and finally brought back to Pondicherry by M. de Beauvillier de Courchant, who had been nominated to succeed de la Prévotière. Lenoir embarked for France, and Dumas was installed by Beauvillier as first Councillor, to become, in course of time, Governor of Pondicherry.

Two months after his arrival in India, Duplex, with a companion named Courton, was sent with sixty French soldiers and ten topasses, to Porto Novo, to obtain reparation for an outrage committed by the

<sup>1</sup> A curiously similar instance occurred in our own Indian history, in July 1758, when the Directors' orders for the formation of the Bengal Council, omitting Clive's name, were set aside and ignored.

native Governor of that place. During the negotiation, being attacked, they inflicted such losses on their assailants, that the redress sought for was obtained. On their way back to Pondicherry the little party was received in triumph by the English at Cuddalore. All Europeans were alike interested in reparation for outrages being exacted. In the following year Dupleix was sent to Madras to effect a sale of silver bullion: in 1724 he made a voyage to China as supercargo of a trading vessel.

His voyage to China, which appears to have been a lucrative one for himself, involved him in an affair of great unpleasantness. He had some pecuniary dealings, at Canton, with one of the Company's employés named Lhuillier. Lhuillier complained to the Directors that Dupleix had cheated him. The Directors sent instructions to Lenoir, who had succeeded to the Governorship of Pondicherry, to investigate the charge, and to dismiss Dupleix from the Company's service, in the event of the charge being proved. Lenoir, without making any inquiry, prevailed on the Council to dismiss Dupleix,

and attempted to get him to embark for France (December 1727). Dupleix declined to go, and sent home his own version of the transaction to the Directors. In July 1729 the Directors' orders for Dupleix's reinstatement were received. During the nineteen months of his suspension he appears to have been in no way straitened for money, as, during the year 1729, he sent 2000 pagodas' worth of diamonds to France for sale on his own private account. His voyage to China had no doubt been very profitable to him. Writing to Vincens, two years later, of the China trade, he says that a trip to China brought independence to captains and supercargoes: 'twenty-five or thirty thousand rupees are quickly pocketed.'<sup>1</sup> It was during this time that he became intimate with the Vincens family, who received him into their house. According to M. Hamont, it was at this time that Dupleix began his study of native politics, and formed the schemes he afterwards carried into effect. There is no evidence of his having done anything of the kind. He seems to have occupied his time with private commerce, and made a trip to

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Vincens, 23rd Mai 1732 (Cultru).



Madras in company with Madame Vincens and her sister.

Immediately on his reinstatement, he claimed the chiefship of the Chandernagore factory, which had become vacant by the death of M. de la Blanchetière. Lenoir ignored Dupleix's claims, and sent Dirois to Chandernagore. Dupleix did not allow the matter to rest there. He appealed to the Directors in Paris, who cancelled Dirois' appointment, and nominated Dupleix to the chiefship of Chandernagore. Ever afterwards Dupleix entertained the most vindictive feelings against Lenoir and Dirois. In numerous letters from Chandernagore they are never alluded to by him without some exhibition of spite and malice, that betoken little nobility of character. Yet, with much hypocrisy, he maintained a friendly correspondence with Lenoir, even offering him a share in his private trade. "Je fais chercher un vaisseau pour les Maldives, je vous y intéresserai de 2000 roupies."<sup>1</sup>

In writing to Dumas to congratulate him on his appointment to the Governorship of the Mauritius, he says: "Notre ami Lenoir

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Lenoir, 25th September 1731 (Cultru).

enrage comme un diable ; il est au désespoir de voir que ses menées et fourberies ne peuvent être admises auprès de la Compagnie.”<sup>1</sup> A few weeks later he was writing to Lenoir : “ Je continue à vous faire mes offres de services et vous remercie de celle que vous avez la bonté de me faire des vôtres.”<sup>2</sup> When Lenoir was leaving India, Dupleix wrote to Dumas, his successor, urging him to demand of the Directors an exemplary punishment for Lenoir : “ Je ne fais aucun doute qu’à l’arrivée on ne lui mette la main sur le collet et sur les vrac où il a ensablé son or, et peut-être que, reduite a la dernière misère, il sera, sur la fin de ses jours, réduit à mendier un misérable emploi, à moins que l’incommodité que lui cause la mer, jointe au chagrin dont il est rongé n’abrège ses jours.”<sup>3</sup> Words prophetic of his own fate. A year after Lenoir had left India he was writing to him : “ J’apprends avec plaisir que vous jouissez d’une parfaite santé, que le ministre et la Compagnie, contents de vos services, vous ont admis au

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Dumas, 14th January 1732 (Cultru).

<sup>2</sup> Dupleix à Lenoir, 8th April 1732 (*id.*).

<sup>3</sup> Dupleix à Dumas, 17th April 1736 (*id.*).

nombre des directeurs. Je vous prie de me continuer votre bienveillance dans le cas où il s'agira de me rendre service."<sup>1</sup> The insincerity and vindictiveness of Dupleix's character appear in these extracts from his correspondence, which are but a part of those that deal with Lenoir and Dirois.

French trade in Bengal was in a languishing condition when Dupleix succeeded to the chiefship of Chandernagore in August or September 1731. Twice a year two or three ships arrived from France with money to pay for the merchandise that had been got ready for them. As soon as they were dispatched, the Company's employés had little to do except to prepare for the next shipment. Those who could command the necessary funds devoted themselves to private commerce. Dupleix threw himself into the work with characteristic energy, and in a short time greatly increased the volume of Chandernagore trade. He also re-established the abandoned factories at Patna and Cossimbazar which had been closed for want of sufficient trade.

His first year in Bengal was distasteful to

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Lenoir, 27th November 1737 (Cultru).

him. His letters at this time are full of complaints. He disliked his fellow-officials and kept aloof from their society. He disliked the country: he wrote that it was a good place to make money in, but Europeans died there like flies. He longed for the society of the Vincens family, and thought with regret of his garden and statues at Pondicherry. He had written the year before to his brother in France to choose and send him out a wife. Now he had changed his mind: he no longer wished his brother to execute the commission: "*l'envie de me marier est un peu ralentie.*" He thought that his salary of 4000 livres was insufficient. The expenses of entertainment were heavy. The English governor at Calcutta received 500 rupees a month, and his house, table, and furniture were paid for by the Company, while he himself had to find everything on 222 rupees a month. The Governor of Pondicherry had the privilege of sending 1000 pagodas' worth of goods to France every year; he would willingly give up his salary in return for a similar privilege. He thought Lenoir was about

to return to France, and besought <sup>his</sup> brother to use the family influence <sup>to</sup> procure him the Pondicherry governorship. Before long, he succeeded in inducing Vincens to resign the Company's service and join him, with all his family, at Chandernagore. From this moment he threw himself energetically into the business of money-making, and became so much attached to Bengal that he left it unwillingly, ten years later, to take up the governorship he had once so eagerly desired.

The conduct of private trade by its employés had been strictly forbidden by the Company in 1719. Two years later permission was given to them to trade under certain restrictions. They were allowed to carry on trade "*d'Inde en Inde*," that is to say, between ports east of the Cape of Good Hope, except to Mocha and China. At first their poverty prevented them from availing themselves of the privilege to any great extent. The Company's vessels were sent yearly to Mocha, the Persian Gulf, China, Manilla, and Pegu, in which the officials were allowed to have a share when they could muster money to trade with,

which was not always the case. In 1730 some of the Pondicherry officials combined to send a ship to Bengal and Surat. In 1734 all restrictions were removed on trade east of the Cape, though the Company still claimed the monopoly of trade in sugar and rice. In 1741 the Company found its share so little profitable, that it abandoned the whole of the trade between ports east of the Cape to its employés. Thus, while the English Company was paying yearly dividends of seven and eight per cent., and making considerable loans to the King's government, the French Company, sinking into insolvency, withdrew altogether from this most lucrative trade. If Dupleix had the Company's interests deeply at heart, it is surprising that he never pointed this out to the Directors in Paris; but, like the rest of the Company's officials, he had his own interests to consider.

His voyage to Canton in 1724 had enabled him to pay off his debt to Dulivier's estate, and thenceforth he began to grow rich. In 1729, as has been mentioned, he was in a position to send 2000 pagodas' worth of diamonds to France. In the following

year he had a share in another venture of the kind. Yet all private trading to Europe was strictly forbidden. But so many of its servants were concerned in this illicit trading, that the Company was powerless to put a stop to it. At the time of his leaving Pondicherry for Bengal, Dupleix was partner with Vincens in two plantations worked by slaves in Bourbon and in Mauritius; and he had a number of trading ventures on borrowed capital at the same time. At Chandernagore his position gave him greater facilities for borrowing, and, with the command of larger capital, he launched out with greater boldness. From Court, an Englishman in Calcutta, he borrowed 20,000 rupees; from the Chief of the Dutch factory at Chinsura 6400, at nine per cent.; from a Patna banker 60,000. He was making money fast. Before long he owned eleven vessels trading to Surat, Manilla, Bassora, the Maldives, Pegu, Achin, Cochin, and Jeddah. On some of his ventures a profit of forty per cent. was earned. Instead of borrowing money, he was soon in a position to lend it, and had close commercial relations with

his English and Dutch neighbours. Two Englishmen, Matthews and Mill, were employed by him to open up trade with Assam. In his private life he lived sumptuously. From France, wines and delicacies not usually seen in India at that time, were sent him by his brother. He procured curiosities, pictures, arms, etc., from Nepaul, Agra, and Delhi. Live animals were sent him from Patna. He dabbled in science, and wrote to his friends in Calcutta to send him English newspapers. Though he did not know English, he had them translated to him. It is evident that his life was one of much mental and intellectual activity. But there is not a trace of the attention he is supposed to have bestowed on politics. On the contrary, when he learns, in 1735, that Dumas was appointed to succeed Lenoir at Pondicherry, he writes: 'Many persons anticipated that I should succeed Lenoir. I have never expected it, so I am now not surprised. Moreover, I could not leave this place at short notice without disarranging my private affairs, which, upon my word, concern me more than the honour of being Governor of Pondicherry, an honour



that goes for nothing as soon as one gets back to Europe, when everybody, returning into his shell, is only distinguished according to the amount of property he has.’<sup>1</sup> In very different terms he writes of the appointment of La Bourdonnais to succeed Dumas at Mauritius and Bourbon. To Cossimbazar, to Pondicherry, to Dumas, and to the Directors in Paris he writes in disparagement and condemnation of La Bourdonnais: “Les bras m’en sont tombés. Il faut que la tête a tourné à la Compagnie ou bien qu’elle veut perdre les îles.”<sup>1</sup> In the following year a venture he made in the Mozambique caused a difference between him and La Bourdonnais, and laid the foundation for a future quarrel.

The year 1735 was not a fortunate one for Dupleix. The *Aimable*, in which he and Vincens had shares, with nearly half a million of rupees on board, was lost in the Red Sea: Vincens, who was in the ship, being saved with difficulty. In the same season two more of his ships, the *Chander-nagor* and the *Diligent*, met with accidents, and the *Union* was detained at Mocha.

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Burat, 4th August 1735 (Cultru).

being able to send him 20,000 rupees more in a few months. But in the same year he experienced further losses.

On the night of the <sup>30th September</sup><sub>11th October</sub> 1737, the Hooghly was visited by a cyclone and earthquake that wrecked Calcutta, and extended many miles up the river. An enormous quantity of shipping was destroyed, and the loss of life was prodigious. Only one French ship was lost, but several were driven ashore, and Dupleix shared in the general loss. Yet, about the same time, he was sending to France contraband jewels, the cost price of which was 12,000 rupees, and bills for 17,000 rupees. He was at this time full of discontent. He had urged the Company to make Chandernagore independent of Pondicherry, but had met with a refusal. He was haunted with the belief that Lenoir would use his influence to have him removed in favour of Dirois, and that La Bourdonnais would be appointed to succeed Dumas at Pondicherry. It was the possibility of this that no doubt prompted him to urge the Directors to make the Chandernagore administration independent of Pondicherry. The Company, in order to

show their satisfaction at the re-establishment of the Cossimbazar and Patna factories, had granted him a gratuity of 100 pistoles. He at first refused to accept it. On a second gratuity of the same amount being made him, he grumbled at having to appear grateful. The *cordon* of St. Lazarus was denied him; he urged his brother to procure him a patent of nobility by bribing the King's private secretary, though he afterwards sneered at Dumas and La Bourdonnais for obtaining their honours by the same method. His ill-humour culminated in the grant of a patent of nobility to Dumas, and he addressed a long memorandum to the Directors, full of egotism, jealousy, and bad temper, in which he asserted his own claims to be equal to those of Dumas, and demanded the same recognition. "N'est-ce pas, Messieurs, me donner à entendre que l'on n'est pas content de mes services, que de m'avoir pas traité comme M. Dumas."<sup>1</sup> While awaiting the Directors' reply he prepared to wind up his affairs and leave India, and we learn incidentally, from one of his letters, that his whole fortune in India and

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à la Compagnie, 28th November 1738 (Cultru).

Europe amounted to a million and a quarter livres, four-fifths of it being in India.

The year 1739 was a most unlucky one for him. He was robbed in an opium transaction by his English agents; a flotilla of boats from Patna was wrecked in the Ganges; his Malacca and Mozambique ventures turned out badly; his Manilla ship was lost, and he was reduced to great straits for ready money. Everything went wrong. A mortal blow had been struck at the already tottering Moghul Empire by Nadir Shah's invasion; the trade of the country was disorganised, and Dupleix had his hands full of unsaleable goods. The Assam venture was a complete loss. A vessel from France with a valuable cargo was lost in the Ganges for want of a pilot. With the exception of what he had remitted to France, he had lost almost everything, and the fortune of Vincens was equally involved. To add to his troubles, four of his subordinates accused him of speculation. He met the accusation boldly, and obtained the dismissal of three of his calumniators. In September, his friend Vincens died. Dupleix had lost the greater part of his gains, and had to abandon hope of returning

to France ; but the man's indomitable spirit still showed itself. Adversity always brought out the best points of his character.

Prosaic as all these details are, they serve to show that Dupleix had, at this time, formed none of the political schemes with which he has been credited : his views were strictly limited to trade. Nor did he bring away a fortune from Bengal, as was afterwards asserted when urging his money claims on the Company. The allusion<sup>1</sup> to "the fortune of several millions which Dupleix acquired in Bengal" cannot be justified, for the simple reason that Dupleix had lost the greater part of his fortune before he left Bengal.<sup>2</sup> By his exertions he had raised Chandernagore to a degree of prosperity that had long been unknown. During his ten years of office the Company's revenues in Bengal had trebled in value.

As a proof of the little attention paid by Dupleix, at this time, to politics, M. Cultru relates an incident that occurred towards the end of his residence at Chandernagore.

<sup>1</sup> *National Review*, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> The fact is also mentioned by Voltaire in his *Fragments sur l'Inde*.

There was at Delhi a certain de Volton who had deserted the French service, and had entered the service of the Emperor as physician. From there he had reopened communication with his countrymen, and, probably wishing to conciliate the French authorities, he offered, in 1739, through the head of the French factory at Patna, to procure for Dupleix a jagir,<sup>1</sup> a sir-o-pao,<sup>2</sup> and the title of Panch Hazari, or Commandant of 5000 horse. In replying to the offer, Dupleix showed little enthusiasm in the matter. He wrote to Patna that he would have nothing to do with any grant of land; the title might be useful, but it would be necessary that it should be given in perpetuity to the governors of Pondicherry and Chandernagore; in any case the offer must be declined if the fees demanded were too large. When informed of the sum required, he declared that de Volton must be a fool if he thought the Company would spend so much on an empty title that would only lead to further expenditure in the future. In reporting the matter to Dumas he states his opinion that the title might be useful in

<sup>1</sup> A grant of land.

<sup>2</sup> A dress of honour.

securing more respect for the French, and thus help them in trading matters, as it would show that they were directly under the protection of the Emperor. In short, he treated the offer from the point of view of a trader : so little had he realised the feebleness into which the Court of Delhi had fallen ; so little thought had he at the time of launching into politics.

## II

THE year 1738 witnessed a new departure in French policy at Pondicherry, produced by the growing disorders in the Carnatic, consequent on the decadence of the Moghul Empire. The Rajah of Tanjore having died, his son and successor, Shahojee, finding his throne in jeopardy through the rivalry of his half-brother Pertab Singh, invited the aid and alliance of the French. In return he offered to make over to them the district of Karikal, of which they were to enjoy the revenues on payment of 40,000 chakrums and a yearly present, in token of Tanjore sovereignty, according to the usual custom of such grants. Dumas accepted the offer, and, on Shahojee's *purwana* being received, deputed Dirois to take possession of the fort of Kircan Gurree, which was included in the agreement. Meanwhile, Shahojee had triumphed over his rival, and, under Dutch advice, repudiated the agree-



ment, treated with ridicule the Brahmins whom Dumas had sent with money and presents, and dispatched troops to Karikal to hold it against the French. Dumas, who was acting without the knowledge of his Directors, was in no condition to engage in hostilities with Tanjore, and saw no alternative but to put up with the breach of faith, when a fresh opportunity presented itself. In addition to internal troubles Tanjore was at the time suffering from external enemies. Under Moghul rule Tanjore had paid tribute to the Carnatic, but for some time past the tribute had remained unpaid, as was happening everywhere in the growing weakness of the Empire. Chunda Sahib, the Dewan and son-in-law of Dost Ali Khan, the Nawab of the Carnatic, who was destined later to play a prominent part in Dupleix' schemes, was warring in the Nawab's name against Tanjore, to enforce the payment of tribute. He had taken Trichinopoly, and, hearing of Shahojee's insulting treatment of the French, sent an agent to Dumas, inviting his assistance in besieging Tanjore; in return for which he undertook to conquer Karikal and make it over to the French. After some hesitation

Dumas sent some ammunition to Chunda Sahib. At the same time, resolved not to be exposed to a second breach of faith, he dispatched Dirois with three vessels to take possession of Karikal and hold it against all comers. For some reason this was not done. Probably it was found that the fort was too strongly held by Shahojee's men, or that its capture by force would make an enemy of Chunda Sahib, who was taking his own measures against Karikal ; so Dirois returned to Pondicherry.

Chunda Sahib kept faith. On the 8th February 1739 his physician, Francisco Pereira, arrived at Pondicherry, bearing a letter to Dumas, in which he announced that he had captured Karikal, and that Dumas might send and take possession. In confirmation, Pereira brought a *purwana* signed by Shahojee acknowledging the French title, and another containing an order to Chunda Sahib's general, Nusseer Khan, to deliver over Karikal to the French. The French flag was hoisted in Karikal on the 14th February, and 100,000 chakrums were paid to Chunda Sahib. Shahojee claimed that some payment should be made

to him, on the basis of his first agreement with Dumas, a claim that could not safely be disregarded. While the negotiation was proceeding, Shahojee was deposed in favour of his rival Pertab Singh, and the affair was finally settled by a payment of 37,502 pagodas, a sum that included the presents made to Tanjore officials during the negotiation. As the Karikal revenues brought in 8000 pagodas yearly, and the acquisition gave openings for an extension of trade, the bargain was apparently a good one for the French. The Directors, in due time, signified their approbation of Dumas' action, treating the matter as a commercial transaction, and ignoring the political side of it. The history of the acquisition of Karikal by Dumas is of interest, because it was the first French acquisition of territory for revenue purposes, and it was by following exactly the same course of action, in furnishing military aid to native chiefs, in return for a promised grant of territory, without the previous consent of the Directors, that Dupleix subsequently played so conspicuous a part in southern India.

In the beginning of 1739 Dumas notified

to the Directors his desire to resign his governorship and return to France. The news took the Directors by surprise. Dumas had been in Pondicherry as governor only four years, during which he had proved himself an able and energetic administrator. They wished to retain his services in India, and received the notification of his wish to resign with some vexation. They nominated Dupleix as his successor, but begged Dumas to reconsider his decision. As an inducement they offered him 600 pagodas, under pretence of reimbursing him for a sum they had disallowed. To Dupleix they wrote that they were willing to ignore the intemperate letter he had addressed to them in November 1738, as having been due to oversensitiveness, and to a want of due reflection.

The result of the Directors' action was to delay Dumas' departure for a year and a half. Meanwhile, the political outlook was threatening. Karikal was not turning out a success, and, owing to the intrigues of the Dutch at Negapatam, great difficulty was experienced in getting in the revenue. The Carnatic was subjected to the attacks

of a new foe, and the safety of Pondicherry itself was threatened.

As Tanjore was tributary to the Carnatic, so the Carnatic was tributary to the Deccan. In the general confusion, the Nawab, Dost Ali Khan, had proclaimed himself ruler, in succession to his uncle, Saadat-oolla Khan, without obtaining the recognition of the Deccan Soobadar, Nizam-ool-Moolk. The Soobadar contented himself for a time with using his influence at Delhi to prevent Dost Ali Khan from receiving confirmation from the Emperor. As the Nawab's power was augmented by the acquisition of Trichinopoly and Madura, Nizam-ool-Moolk's resentment increased; but important changes going on at Delhi prevented him from asserting his authority.

In May 1740 a Mahratta force under Raghojee Bhonsla invaded the Carnatic.<sup>1</sup> Dost Ali Khan met them at the Damalcherry Pass, and was defeated and slain.

<sup>1</sup> According to Orme the Mahrattas were incited to overrun the Carnatic by Nizam-ool-Moolk, which seems improbable. Wilks says they were invited in by Sufdar Ali Khan to break the power of Chunda Sahib; but Sufdar Ali Khan does not appear to have suspected Chunda Sahib's designs till later. Grant Duff says the invasion was ordered by the Peishwa in his own interests.

His son, Sufdar Ali Khan, shut himself up in Vellore, but sent his family and valuables to Pondicherry, where his father's widow had already found asylum. The fortifications of Pondicherry were so superior to anything then known in India, as to promise safety from the Mahratta horsemen, provided the French were friendly. Dumas received the fugitives, at the risk of bringing on himself Raghojee's enmity. Chunda Sahib, who had taken the field with 15,000 men, on the pretence of going to Dost Ali's assistance, by calculated delays failed to join him, and, on hearing of his defeat, hastened back to Trichinopoly.

The Mahrattas overran the Carnatic, wasting the whole country, according to their custom, and made themselves masters of Arcot. Raghojee then summoned Dumas to pay tribute, and to surrender the fugitives. Dumas bid him defiance, and prepared to defend himself. Fortunately Raghojee's presence was required in the Deccan, where the death of the Peishwa Bajee Rao in April had given rise to the usual quarrels about the succession. On Sufdar Ali Khan agreeing to pay a heavy tribute,

Raghojee withdrew his troops from the Carnatic.

In September, Sufdar Ali Khan, accompanied by Chunda Sahib, whose family had also been granted asylum by Dumas, visited Pondicherry. They were received with much ceremony, and were loud in their expressions of gratitude. To Dumas, besides many valuable presents, the new Nawab made a grant of the village of Archiwak, adjoining Pondicherry. At the end of a fortnight Sufdar Ali Khan betook himself to Arcot, while Chunda Sahib repaired to Trichinopoly, where he was planning to make himself independent, leaving his family at Pondicherry. Sufdar Ali Khan, becoming aware of his designs, summoned the Mahrattas to return. In August he had promised them a portion of territory as part of the ransom of the Carnatic: he now told them that they might keep Trichinopoly for themselves, if they would take it and dispose of Chunda Sahib. In December, they suddenly re-entered the Carnatic, and made straight for Trichinopoly. After a three months' siege, Chunda Sahib was forced to

surrender, his two brothers having been slain in attempting to relieve the place. Raghojee retired, after making over Trichinopoly to Morar Rao, the Mahratta chief of Gootee, carrying off with him Chunda Sahib, who was placed in confinement at Satara.

At Mahe on the west coast, also, Dumas found cause for much anxiety. After its first acquisition, in 1725, it had proved so costly and troublesome to the Company that the Directors had ordered Lenoir to abandon it as a military post. Lenoir prevailed on them to cancel their order, and since 1728 things had gone better there. In the end of 1738, while Karikal affairs were still unsettled, Dirois had been appointed to the chiefship of Mahe. Before long he allowed himself to be drawn into local quarrels, and in June 1740, while Dumas was engaged in preparations to defend Pondicherry against Raghojee, Mahe was blockaded by the Nairs. The confusion reigning in the Carnatic made it impossible for Dumas to send a force to raise the blockade, and Mahe was left to take care of itself.

Early in 1740, Dupleix learned from



Dumas that he had sent home his resignation twelve months before ; that the nomination of his successor might soon be expected, and that, in all probability, the choice of the Directors would fall on himself. To an ambitious man the prospect should have been one of no small satisfaction. Dupleix had proved his capacity at Chandernagore ; he was still at an age when he might expect a long term of office as the head of all the French establishments in India, and Dumas had shown that there were political developments possible at Pondicherry that had been out of his reach at Chandernagore. But Dupleix was so engrossed in local interests and his own private trade that he was now as unwilling to leave Bengal as he had been to stay there when first appointed. He wrote to his brother : “ Dumas m'apprend qu'il a demandé son congé en Janvier 1739 ; il recevra la réponse cette année. Il compte parce qu'il me marque que ce sera moi qui le relèverai. Si la chose arrive, il la faudra recevoir ; mais, en verité, je ne le souhaite pas, et au titre près, je suis bien mieux ici, ceci est mon enfant, je l'ai formé, je l'ai fait ce qu'il est, et là (Pondichery) tout est fait :

il n'est point possible d'en faire davantage, à moins de tromper la Compagnie."<sup>1</sup> And this was not a passing expression of opinion prompted by a wish to remain in Bengal. In his letter to the Directors, fifteen months earlier, he had told them he had no ambition to succeed Lenoir and Dumas at Pondicherry, because they had left no room for improvement there: "Quand même je serais à Pondichery je me trouverais trop heureux de soutenir les choses sur le pied où ils les ont mises. Tout y est réglé, tout y est fait, je ne vois plus d'avantage considérable à y procurer à la Compagnie."<sup>2</sup> His views at this time were confined to trade.

He was further embarrassed by the loss of nearly everything he had acquired by private trade, as he acknowledged in a letter, written at this time, to Hardancourt, one of the Directors. Among other debts, he owed a large sum to the Vincens family, which he was unable to pay. Fourteen years later (October 1754), when drawing up a list of his debts, he acknowledged still owing 118,000 rupees to Vincens' estate. He found tem-

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à son frère, 11th March 1740 (Cultru).

<sup>2</sup> Dupleix à la Compagnie, 25th November 1738 (*id.*).

porary relief from the claim by marrying Vincens' widow, on 17th April 1741, when preparing to proceed to Pondicherry.

Madame Vincens' origin was not a distinguished one. The account of her noble Portuguese origin, her great political ability, and her wide knowledge of Eastern languages is only part of the exaggeration that has accumulated round the name of Duplex. Her mother was a Portuguese half-caste named de Castro, born at Madras in 1684, so devoid of education that she could not sign her name. Her father, Jacques Albert, was a French surgeon. To Vincens she had borne at least eight children (eleven, according to Cultru), of whom five were living at the time of her marriage to Duplex, when she was thirty-five years old. She was a clever woman of intriguing nature and domineering disposition, whose influence over Duplex was, in the long-run, mischievous to him. Her knowledge of Tamil, the only native tongue with which she was acquainted, must have been of great use to him at the time when almost every European was at the mercy of native interpreters; but the part she played in Carnatic affairs has been much

exaggerated. On one occasion she wrote to Saunders, the Governor of Madras, to complain of a district under her charge having been ravaged by English troops. Saunders politely declined to discuss the subject with her, telling her that ladies should not concern themselves with business affairs: he would discuss the matter with her husband.<sup>1</sup> She managed the native spies maintained by Dupleix in the English settlements, and, during the siege of Pondicherry, received the reports of spies in Boscawen's camp. She had under her orders a body of peons whose depredations, in which she shared, were more formidable to the besieged than to the besiegers. A sortie, projected by her, cost Dupleix the life of M. Paradis, his best officer. Apparently she spied on Dupleix himself. His confidential native secretary, Ananda Ranga Pillay, relates how native attendants in her pay were invariably present at all interviews.<sup>2</sup> The grave money diffi-

<sup>1</sup> Saunders to Madame la Marquise Dupleix, 26th April 1754 (Cultru).

<sup>2</sup> *Les Français dans l'Inde*. Extraits du Journal d'Anandaranga-poullé, courtier de la Compagnie Française des Indes. Traduits du Tamoul. Julien Vinson, Paris, 1894.

culties in which Dupleix found himself during his last year in India were in part due to her mismanagement of the Carnatic revenues, the peculations of her agent, and the general disorder that existed in the districts of which she had sole charge. She bore Dupleix a son, in October 1742, who did not survive his birth.

On the  $\frac{9^{\text{th}}}{20^{\text{th}}}$  October 1741, Dumas sailed for France. A month before his departure a squadron of seven vessels, commanded by La Bourdonnais, reached Pondicherry. This squadron had been dispatched from France, under circumstances to be narrated later, in the expectation of a war with England. The two countries, however, were still at peace, but its arrival was a timely one in other respects, as it enabled Dumas to send aid to Mahe, which was still being blockaded by the Nairs. It also enabled La Bourdonnais to concert measures with Dumas against the eventuality of war with the English, which bore fruit five years later. On the same day that Dumas bade farewell to Pondicherry, La Bourdonnais sailed for Mahe, where he restored order in December.

On the  $\frac{4^{\text{th}}}{15^{\text{th}}}$  January 1742, Dupleix landed

at Pondicherry and assumed the reins of government. On the <sup>21st April</sup><sub>2nd May</sub>, more than six months after Dumas' departure, a *firman* arrived from the Moghul Emperor, obtained by Sufdar Ali Khan in grateful recognition of the protection granted him by Dumas against the Mahrattas, in which the title of Munsubdar of 4500 horse, with the dignity of carrying a standard and using the *nagara*,<sup>1</sup> were conferred on Dumas. These dignities were personal to Dumas, and not transferable to his successor; nor did Dupleix ever show the least disposition to adopt them. His views about native titles at this time were those he had expressed in the de Volton business three years earlier. The title of Commandant of Horsemen was purely honorary, like the honorary colonelcies conferred by one sovereign on another in our own day, and conveyed no military authority. The story that Dupleix made use of the title, and that he visited Chandernagore to receive the homage of the Faujdar of Hooghly is without foundation.<sup>2</sup> From

<sup>1</sup> Kettledrums.

<sup>2</sup> The story of Dupleix's visit to Chandernagore to receive homage is an invention of the Abbé Guyon. Hamont is responsible for the idea that the firman made the

the time of his first arrival in Pondicherry in January 1742, till his final departure in October 1754, Dupleix never left the place, except for a short visit to Gingee in 1751.<sup>1</sup>

His life at this time was apparently not a happy one. His health was bad, and he thought of resigning; so far was he from anticipating the part he was destined to play. But the imminence of war with England put an end to the project. The dispute over the Austrian Succession threatened to put all Europe in a blaze. France was taking the field, as the ally of the Elector of Bavaria, and was striking at Hanover. Before long England took the field as the ally of Austria, and the two nations were arrayed in arms against each other,<sup>2</sup> while nominally at peace, as the auxiliaries of Austria and Bavaria: an example that was to be followed, before many years, by the rival Companies in India.

Karikal was continuing to give trouble.

title transferable to Dumas' successor; but the wording of the firman shows that this was not the case.

<sup>1</sup> Cultru, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> The battle of Dettingen was fought nine months before the declaration of war.

The Tanjore Chief was playing false, demanding further payments, and preventing the revenue being gathered. In June 1743 the powder magazine was blown up by accident, killing the governor, Febvrier, and a number of men. Dupleix sent Paradis there as governor. Paradis soon perceived that no negotiation would ever settle the matter, and it must be decided by force. But Dupleix had not yet gauged the military weakness of native armies, and would have none of it. He wrote to the Directors that they would do well to get rid of the costly encumbrance. Meanwhile, Paradis took the matter into his own hands, and a combat that cost the Tanjoreans sixty or seventy men put an end to their opposition for a time.

The affairs of the Carnatic continued to be disturbed. Sufdar Ali Khan and the Mahrattas in Trichinopoly were quarrelling, and Nizam-ool-Moolk was preparing to enforce his claims to arrears of tribute at the head of an army. In view of anticipated trouble, Sufdar Ali Khan sent his family and valuables to Madras. It is remarkable that he should not have sent them to Pondi-



cherry, where they had found protection eighteen months earlier. According to Orme he chose Madras at the instigation of his Dewan, Meer Assad, Chunda Sahib's rival, who suspected an understanding between Dupleix and Chunda Sahib. Since the invasion of the Mahrattas, two years before this, Chunda Sahib's wife and his younger son Reza Sahib had continued to reside in Pondicherry. Chunda Sahib, from his confinement in Satara, had made an appeal to Dupleix, through his family ; but he could have made no offer that Dupleix would have cared to entertain, likely to endanger the good relations existing between the French and Sufdar Ali Khan.

In October 1742, Sufdar Ali Khan was murdered by his brother-in-law Mortaza Ali Khan, who gained over the troops and proclaimed himself Nawab of the Carnatic. In a few weeks the troops broke away from Mortaza Ali Khan, who sought safety in Vellore, while Mahommed Said, the young son of Sufdar Ali Khan, was proclaimed Nawab.

In the following May, Nizam-ool-Moolk advanced at the head of a large army into

the Carnatic, which was fast lapsing into anarchy.<sup>1</sup> Mahommed Said was set aside as too young to exercise authority, the Mahrattas were forced to evacuate Trichinopoly, and Nizam-ool-Moolk marched back to the Deccan after restoring order, and appointing Khoja Abdullah as Nawab of the Carnatic. A few months later, Khoja Abdullah was poisoned by an unknown hand, and Anwarooddeen was appointed, provisionally, in his place; Nizam-ool-Moolk having declared his intention to confer the Nawabship on Mahommed Said on his reaching the age of manhood. A few months later, again (June 1744), Mahommed Said was assassinated by a Pathan, instigated, according to general belief, by Mortaza Ali Khan, and Anwarooddeen was confirmed permanently in the Nawabship. These rapid changes were watched by Dupleix without any attempt to intervene or take advantage of them, but he cannot fail to have observed that the Chiefship of the Carnatic was at the disposal of the strongest, that the people were not attached to any particular ruler or family, and that

<sup>1</sup> See Wilks, i. 254.

there were no hereditary rights to the Nawabship. His hands were soon to be occupied with more vital interests.

In the autumn of 1744 it became known that war had been declared between France and England. The Directors in Paris, in anticipation of war, had already written to Dupleix to do his utmost to prevent hostilities east of the Cape of Good Hope. They could hold out to him no hope of assistance in men or money. The finances of the Company were at so low an ebb that they had, some months before, ordered him to reduce expenses; and the King was not disposed to send troops or men-of-war to India, being already sufficiently occupied in Europe and America. They enjoined on him the necessity of avoiding any aggressive action. It has been generally held that Dupleix, at this juncture, appealed to the Nawab Anwarooddeen for protection, but this does not appear to have been the case. Having neither troops nor money, in December he addressed the English officials at Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay, proposing that no act of hostility should be committed by either nation east of the Cape of Good

Hope. In reply he was told that the proposal could not be entertained. His design was not only to preserve French settlements in India from attack, but to tie the hands of the British Navy in the Indian and China seas.

Six weeks after the declaration of war, a squadron of four men-of-war under Commodore Barnet sailed from the Downs to protect English trade in the Indian seas. The unexpected arrival of La Bourdonnais on the Indian coast, in 1741, had shown the English Company the danger to which their trade was exposed, and their representations to the Crown obtained Barnet's dispatch to the East. But no intention of attacking the French trading settlements in India found place in the plans of the English ministry; Barnet's instructions were limited to protecting English commerce and harrying French commerce at sea.<sup>1</sup> From Madagascar Barnet steered for the Malacca Straits, where he captured (in January 1745) three French ships from Canton, a French privateer that had been fitted out at Pondi-

<sup>1</sup> The instructions themselves cannot now be found, but the covering letter exists, and shows that his operations were only to be extended to sea operations. (*Admiralty Orders.*)

cherry, and a Manilla ship, the *Mahommed Shah*, sailing under a French pass. According to accounts at the time, the *Mahommed Shah*, in which Dupleix had an interest, had treasure on board to the amount of over £50,000. This severe blow, falling both on the Company and himself, roused Dupleix's extreme wrath. Naturally arrogant and impatient of opposition, the loss awoke in his mind a vindictive feeling against the English that coloured all his subsequent acts, and frequently obscured his judgment. It soon became known at the Deccan and Carnatic Courts that Dupleix was seeking to revenge himself on the English. The Soobadar and the Nawab at once addressed *purwanas* to the French, English, and Dutch factories, ordering them to respect all vessels bearing passes from the Nawab's representative. To Dupleix himself Anwarooddeen addressed a letter, reminding him that the European factories were under the protection of the Emperor, that they were held for trading purposes only, and would be protected from attack, and that he, Dupleix, would be held responsible if he broke the peace.

In all previous European wars, hostilities

had never extended to any part of the Moghul Emperor's dominions, and neither Pondicherry nor Madras had men to employ in enterprises outside their factory walls. Determined to revenge himself, Dupleix wrote to Bourbon to claim the assistance offered to him by La Bourdonnais. Meanwhile, he did his best to excite the Nawab's enmity against the English, writing that he was able to defend himself if attacked ; that the English had broken the peace, and if the Nawab would not punish them he must not be surprised if the French took matters into their own hands.

The English Council at Madras protested to the Nawab that Barnet was not under their orders, and they had no authority over him. To which the Nawab replied that any attack made on the French possessions by Barnet would be visited on Madras. This so alarmed the Madras Council that they impressed on Barnet the necessity of confining his operations to the sea. So Pondicherry, which was at the mercy of his squadron, was not attacked, and Dupleix continued his preparations for war.

Since 1735 La Bourdonnais had held the

governorship of Bourbon and Mauritius. He was a man of energetic and adventurous disposition, and a sailor of the best type. As described by Orme, "His knowledge of mechanics rendered him capable of building a ship from the keel : his skill in navigation, of conducting her to any part of the globe : and his courage, of defending her against any equal force." For some years he had served in the French Company's marine, and had distinguished himself at the capture of Mahe in 1725. He had afterwards quarrelled with Lenoir, and for two years had taken service with the Portuguese. He had then re-entered the Company's service as Governor of the islands. In 1739, while in France, when war with England appeared imminent, he had formed a syndicate among his friends to fit out a small privateering squadron to prey on English trade in the East. Before he could sail, the Company took over the project, and, in April 1741, he sailed in command of five Company's ships, arriving at Pondicherry a few days before Dumas sailed for Europe.<sup>1</sup> Though war was averted, he was able to render

<sup>1</sup> See page 36.

opportune service at Mahe, as has already been related.

Among the plans he had formed for injuring English commerce was one for making a raid on Madras, and holding the town to ransom. To a man of his training, such desultory attacks were more congenial than the deliberate methods of scientific warfare. The scheme was imparted to Dumas when they met at Pondicherry, and afterwards to Dupleix, who thought so well of it that he sent his chief engineer, M. Paradis, to Madras to prepare a plan of attack. War not breaking out, the squadron was recalled to France, La Bourdonnais remaining at Bourbon. On news of the declaration of war reaching him, he received similar orders to those sent to Dupleix to avoid hostilities if possible.<sup>1</sup> He paid no attention to them. At once he addressed Dupleix, undertaking to fit out six vessels with fifteen or eighteen hundred men, proposing that Dupleix should contribute three or four hundred more, and that they should together essay some enterprise that would

<sup>1</sup> The government of the Isles of France was independent of the government of the French trading settlements in India.



make good their losses. The expense was to be borne partly by the Company, partly by Dupleix and himself. His ideas were those of the adventurer rather than of the naval officer. Dupleix was still hoping that neutrality would be preserved, and disapproved of the project : but his pacific ideas disappeared on hearing of the losses caused by Barnet's squadron, and he wrote to La Bourdonnais to push on his preparations, to which he contributed 10,000 rupees from his private purse.

Throughout the year (1745) La Bourdonnais worked with ardour at the completion of his armament, converting merchant ships into men-of-war, collecting troops and provisions, and notifying Dupleix of the stores he would require on arrival. Dupleix, on his side, was no less diligent in his preparations. A system for obtaining constant intelligence from Madras was established through the eldest daughter of Madame Dupleix, who was married to a merchant there named Barnewall or Coyle de Barneval.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This man is described by French writers as a British subject. The English records call him a Frenchman. When Madras was restored to the English in 1749, he was arrested and ordered to leave the country, and his house

As the time for action approached, La Bourdonnais tried to shift part of the responsibility for the attack on Madras on to Dupleix's shoulders. The Directors in France had been kept in complete ignorance of the design, and, in the event of failure, he wished Dupleix to share the blame. On the 3rd February 1746 he wrote to Dupleix : " Je veux me faire une loi de partager avec vous tout l'honneur du succès de nos opérations. Nous devons nous regarder l'un et l'autre comme également intéressés à la conduite des événements. Il s'agit de nous consulter réciproquement dans le cours de cette expédition."<sup>1</sup> Dupleix, however, had no idea of having the responsibility thrust on him. He replied that the honour of success would be La Bourdonnais'; he himself would assist in every way that was in his power. He politely declined to take any credit for the scheme, but pointed out that the destruction of the English squadron

was confiscated. He came to England and petitioned the Court of Directors, who permitted him to return *home*, and trade as a Free Merchant. He appears to have returned to India, where Dupleix gave him a military commission. The name appears in the Madras records of 1716.

<sup>1</sup> La Bourdonnais à Dupleix, 3rd February 1746 (Cultru).

was necessary before Madras could be attacked. He was very far at present from desiring to direct French policy in the East at his pleasure. At this time too he was gratified by receiving from France letters of nobility and the *cordon* of St. Michael.

While his preparations were still incomplete, La Bourdonnais received news from France that a squadron was being dispatched to him to be under his orders. His instructions were to convey a sum of money to Pondicherry, and then to cruise against English commerce in the Bay of Bengal. He was to return to the islands about June 1746, and send the squadron back to France in the following year. At the same time a certain amount of discretion was left him to change the plan according to circumstances, in which case he was to act in consultation with Dupleix, who was directed to second his efforts. The Directors were still in ignorance of the project against Madras, or of the preparations that had been made in Pondicherry and the islands.

In March (1746) all was ready. Hardly had the combined squadron left its anchorage when it was scattered by a terrible storm.

One ship was lost, others were dismasted, and the whole expedition was forced to put back to refit on the Madagascar coast. La Bourdonnais' energy and skill triumphed over all difficulties. By the beginning of June all was again ready, and, with nine men-of-war carrying 3300 men, La Bourdonnais sailed for Pondicherry, where he arrived on the  $\frac{27^{\text{th}} \text{ June}}{8^{\text{th}} \text{ July}}$  after fighting an indecisive action with the English squadron, in which neither side showed much stomach for the fight. Barnet had died three months before, and the command of the English squadron had been assumed by Peyton, an inefficient officer, who, after this engagement, effaced himself and his squadron till the arrival of Commodore Griffin in November; too late to save Madras.

While Dupleix had been at Chander-nagore, a difference had arisen between him and La Bourdonnais concerning a matter of trade, and he had not been sparing of his comments on La Bourdonnais when the latter had been appointed Governor of the islands; but there had been no open quarrel, and of late the two had been drawn together by a common aim. From the

moment of setting foot in Pondicherry, La Bourdonnais commenced a quarrel with Dupleix that bid fair to ruin the whole expedition. He complained that he was not honoured with the same salutes and honours as Dupleix, and the complaint would appear to have had some point, as Dumas had received him five years before with equal honours. As Governor of the islands he was not subordinate to the Governor of Pondicherry. He ostentatiously paraded his men in front of Dupleix's house, making them render him the honours that Dupleix would not pay him, and demanded the punishment of an officer in charge of a guard who declined to give him the salute paid to the Governor of Pondicherry. Instead of humouring his vanity, in view of the important project they had embarked upon, Dupleix met his complaints with an equal show of pride, spoke injuriously of him to others, and inflicted small slights on him that were bound to be felt and resented.

In the beginning of August, La Bourdonnais took his squadron for a three weeks' cruise to the southward to look for the English squadron, and found them off the

north coast of Ceylon. For three days the two squadrons watched each other without engaging: Peyton, with an inferior force, declining the combat, and La Bourdonnais not forcing it on.

On his return, the quarrel went on worse than ever. The two men could only meet in Council, where violent scenes took place. Before long it was evident that La Bourdonnais was weakening in his designs against Madras, and shrinking from the responsibility. He proposed an attack on Cuddalore and Fort St. David. Dupleix would not hear of it. It would expose the French to the anger of the Nawab, without any corresponding benefit. The resources of Pondicherry were being strained past endurance, while the health of the troops, cooped up on board ship, was suffering. Dupleix was beside himself with anger, and talked before others of "ce chien de La Bourdonnais."<sup>1</sup> La Bourdonnais had all along refused to acknowledge that he was subject to the authority of the Council, and claimed to do as he thought best. Now he demanded the Council's orders. The

<sup>1</sup> *Les Français dans l'Inde.*

Council gave him no orders, but stated their opinion that he should either proceed against Madras or against the English squadron. In the event of his deciding not to proceed against Madras, the sepoy's entertained for the purpose must be disbanded, as their cost was too heavy to be borne indefinitely, and the soldiers belonging to the garrison that he had taken on board must be landed. In fact, 200 men that had been put on board when the squadron first arrived at Pondicherry were disembarked. La Bourdonnais himself took up his residence on shore, and sent the squadron under M. de la Porte-Barre to cruise on the coast. After a feeble attempt to capture an English vessel, the *Princess Mary*, in the Madras roads, which led to a two hours' bombardment of the fort, the squadron returned to Pondicherry. At last La Bourdonnais, after a violent scene with Dupleix, made up his mind to attack Madras. Whatever blame may attach to Dupleix for his share in these dissensions, to him is due the sole credit of keeping La Bourdonnais to the original project of the expedition. La Bourdonnais was the author of it, but his object was

plunder. Still, it is difficult to account for his want of resolution when the moment for action had arrived, and it is clear that, except for Dupleix, the attack on Madras would have hung fire.

The objections of the Nawab had meanwhile been surmounted. The great forces brought by La Bourdonnais, together with the ignominious flight of Peyton's squadron from the coast, showed him that the English were not worth considering, and all further doubts were resolved by the present of 50,000 pagodas, and the promise of a similar sum after the capture of Madras. The French claimed at the time that they held the Nawab's *purwana* granting them permission to attack Madras.

Madras was the richest and most populous town on the Coromandel coast. The narrow strip of land leased from the Arcot government, had, under the English Company, developed into a settlement of 250,000 inhabitants. But it was in no condition to resist an attack. The defences, poor at the best, had been allowed to fall into disrepair through the Company's parsimony; while the Council, trusting in the Nawab's



protection, the presence of Peyton's squadron on the coast, and the neutrality that had hitherto been observed in European wars, had only commenced to repair them when they heard of La Bourdonnais' armament. The Governor was Mr. Morse, and the garrison consisted of about 200 European soldiers of the inferior quality that the Company maintained in its factories, together with a number of half-armed undisciplined peons. The military officers were three lieutenants, two of whom were foreigners, and seven ensigns promoted from the ranks. Only two of the ten officers were deemed efficient.<sup>1</sup> For sixty years it had been the policy of the Company to keep their military force in a state of depression, being more solicitous lest they should be dangerous to themselves than efficient against an enemy. When war appeared to be imminent in 1742, the Directors had appointed Major Knipe, an old King's officer of thirty years' service, to command at Madras, and made preparations to increase the garrison

<sup>1</sup> Those desirous of forming an idea of the Company's military officers at this time should study Lord Egmont's speech in the House of Commons in 1754, on the Bill to extend the Mutiny Act to the East Indies and St. Helena.

to 600 men. But the men were not sent, and Knipe died four months after arrival. Undefended wealth is certain to be attacked sooner or later, and La Bourdonnais had marked Madras as an easy prey.

When aware at last of the threatening storm, Morse made an appeal for protection to the Nawab, who sent a sham warning to Dupleix. After a few hours' bombardment by La Bourdonnais, the place surrendered unconditionally, on  $\frac{10\text{th}}{21\text{st}}$  September, without the French having lost a single man. Before La Bourdonnais left Pondicherry, Dupleix had written to him suggesting that the English should be allowed to buy off the attack on payment of a million pagodas, the restitution of the captured French vessels, and an engagement to observe neutrality east of the Cape for the remainder of the war; and La Bourdonnais, agitated by a rumour of the approach of Peyton's squadron, had hastened the surrender by holding out hopes that the town would be restored on payment of a ransom. While he was at Pondicherry nothing had been settled as to what was to be done with Madras in the

event of capture. Directly the place fell, he informed Dupleix that it had surrendered unconditionally. Dupleix at once wrote to La Bourdonnais charging him to entertain no thoughts of a ransom, lest he should embroil the French with the Nawab, to whom he had promised to deliver the town in the event of its capture. His idea was to sack it and dismantle the fort, before making it over to the Nawab.

La Bourdonnais was in no humour to listen to any suggestion from Dupleix. The design had been his, the conquest was his : he was not under the orders of the Governor of Pondicherry, and would do as he pleased. To his corsair-like ideas of war, booty and ransom were the only objects. From the moment the place was in his hands, a systematic plunder of private property was instituted under his supervision. Dupleix sent Commissioners to take charge of the place ; La Bourdonnais imprisoned some of them and sent the rest back to Pondicherry. He even talked of bombarding Pondicherry to bring Dupleix to reason. With Morse and the Madras Council he came to an agreement to restore the fort, with half of

the warlike stores in it, in return for bills of exchange, payable in two years, to the amount of 1,100,000 pagodas. In addition to the booty he had obtained he is said to have secured a private payment from Morse of 100,000 pagodas. Such transactions are not committed to paper, but the circumstantial evidence places the matter almost beyond doubt. Afterwards, on reaching France, he was openly accused of receiving the bribe, and the charge has clung to him ever since.

Dupleix was in despair. He had committed himself with the Nawab: without orders from the Directors he had exhausted the resources of Pondicherry; and now the treasure found in Madras had disappeared. Madras itself was being given back to the English, and La Bourdonnais had from the first made known his intention of carrying back his ships and soldiers to the islands not later than the  $\frac{4^{\text{th}}}{15^{\text{th}}}$  October. In vain he sent letters and officers to La Bourdonnais: they were treated with disdain. At one moment La Bourdonnais told him the affair was settled, and quoted orders given him by the Directors, five years before, under other

conditions, forbidding him to establish any new place of trade ; at another he told him there was no treaty with the English. So the dispute went on, and, as subsequent events showed, its prolongation proved favourable to Dupleix. La Bourdonnais was perplexed, because he foresaw that, without Dupleix's assent, his pledge to restore Madras to the English would not be redeemed. Time was pressing ; the season for tempestuous weather on the coast was approaching, and the open roadstead of Madras afforded no protection to shipping. On the  $\frac{2^{\text{nd}}}{13^{\text{th}}}$  October the convention was settled, but not signed, by which the French were to evacuate the town two days later. That same night a hurricane of great violence struck the coast. La Bourdonnais was blown out to sea ; four of his ships foundered, and the rest were saved with difficulty, after losing their masts, and having to throw a number of their guns overboard. His armament was effectively crippled, and of the Madras plunder much was lost. He regained his anchorage, and proceeded to complete the convention ; but told the English that, owing to the obstinacy of

Dupleix, the surrender must be delayed for three months. According to Hamont he told the English officials that the terms of the convention were approved by Dupleix, though he had in his possession a letter from the Pondicherry council refusing to recognise it. Thus, after playing false to Dupleix, he now played false to the English, who were obliged to put up with the delay. On the  $\frac{12^{\text{th}}}{23^{\text{rd}}}$  October, after making over the command to D'Epréménil,<sup>1</sup> the first Councillor at Pondicherry, he sailed for that place.

At Pondicherry he remained only two days, without setting foot on shore. During his absence, three men-of-war had arrived from France, and had landed a detachment of troops. The Directors in Paris had heard of the project against Madras, and had sent orders to Dupleix to hold it in the event of capture. Owing to the crippled state of his ships, La Bourdonnais was also obliged to land 1200 men, 900 of whom were

<sup>1</sup> D'Epréménil had married the eldest daughter of Madame Dupleix, and had been designed by Dupleix for the charge of Madras from the moment of its capture. La Bourdonnais excluded him from any share in the convention with the English.

Europeans, whom he would otherwise have carried away to the islands. In this way Dupleix had at his disposal a force of 3000 Europeans. Thus the storm, so fatal to La Bourdonnais, unexpectedly placed at Dupleix's disposal a body of troops that were of immense value to him in subsequent events.

On arriving at Bourbon, La Bourdonnais found that a new governor had been dispatched from France to take his place, so he sailed for the West Indies. Thence he transferred himself to a Dutch ship, impatient to reach France and justify himself. But war had been declared between England and Holland: he was taken prisoner, and carried to London. Here he was treated with great consideration. What had happened in India after his departure was known, and to the English he appeared a loyal and generous foe, while Dupleix was regarded as a vindictive enemy who had failed to observe a solemn treaty. Being allowed to visit France on parole, he was thrown into the Bastille, where he remained a prisoner three years, and died 9th September 1753, shortly after his release.

We have arrived at the most important moment of Dupleix's career. Madras had been left at his mercy, and from the action he now took sprung all the consequences that have made his name famous. Without hesitation he resolved to set aside La Bourdonnais' convention with the English and to defy the Nawab. By a gift of money and the promise of more he had obtained the Nawab's permission to attack Madras. By promising to surrender the place to him he had kept the Nawab quiet during La Bourdonnais' occupation. Now the Nawab learned that both promises were to be broken. Exasperated at the defiance of his authority, he set his army in motion, and it appeared before Madras under his son, Mahfooz Khan, almost before La Bourdonnais' sails had disappeared from the horizon. Sending for D'Eprésménil, and ordering his deputy, Barthélemy, to hold Madras against all attacks, Dupleix dispatched Paradis with reinforcements to his assistance. But before Paradis could arrive Barthélemy had already taken action. Finding that his water supply was cut off by the besiegers, he ordered a sortie, which



was vigorously carried out by M. de la Tour,<sup>1</sup> defeating and driving off the advanced parties of the Nawab's army, capturing their camp, and killing some 70 men, without suffering loss himself. Collecting his men, Mahfooz Khan then resolved to intercept Paradis, and took up his position at S. Thomé. Paradis, whose little force consisted only of 300 Europeans, 200 topasses and sepoys, with 10 horsemen, did not hesitate to attack. Fording the Adyar River under fire of the Nawab's artillery, he delivered one volley and charged. The Nawab's troops gave way and retired into the town. Paradis followed them up and made a great slaughter among the crowded masses entangled in the narrow lanes of S. Thomé. The rout was completed by the arrival of a portion of the garrison under de la Tour. Mahfooz Khan escaped with difficulty, and his army was dispersed in flight.

On entering Madras, Paradis issued a proclamation annulling the treaty of ransom made by La Bourdonnais. He then pro-

<sup>1</sup> de la Tour was a captain of grenadiers, one of Dupleix's best officers. He distinguished himself greatly in the defence of Pondicherry, after which we hear no more of him.

ceeded, under orders from Dupleix, to carry out measures for the permanent destruction of the English settlement. All merchandise, warlike stores, and horses were taken possession of. The English were, to a man, treated as prisoners of war. The Governor and some of the principal inhabitants were sent to Pondicherry, and ignominiously paraded through the streets.<sup>1</sup> The rest were called on to give their parole not to act against the French until regularly exchanged. The natives who refused to take an oath of allegiance to the French were expelled the town. Measures were then taken to improve and strengthen the fortifications.

It is evident that Dupleix had been in a state of indecision as to the disposal of Madras. On the 26th August  
6th September, before La Bourdonnais had started on his enterprise,

<sup>1</sup> This has been denied by Cartwright, who calls it an invention of La Bourdonnais: but it is related by Orme, the most accurate of historians. Orme was in Bengal at the time and intimately acquainted with all the English concerned. The act was in keeping with Dupleix's character. In August 1753 when Lawrence's palanquin was captured by the Mahrattas, during the action with Brenier, Dupleix had it paraded through the streets of Pondicherry as a proof of Lawrence's defeat and death.

he signified his willingness to allow the English to buy off the attack by the payment of a million pagodas and the restitution of the vessels captured by Barnet. Four days later he wrote to the Nawab that he was attacking Madras under orders from the King of France. On the day that Madras surrendered, he wrote to La Bourdonnais that he had promised the Nawab to make Madras over to him, "*bien entendu dans l'état que nous jugerons convenable.*" His idea apparently then was to sack and destroy the place, and leave it for the Nawab to do what he pleased with it. He was desirous of avoiding hostilities with the Nawab, but the Nawab's prompt action left him no alternative but submission or resistance; so he decided to fight for his prize.

How far Dupleix was justified in breaking the convention with the English is a point on which opinions will probably differ. The convention was one that La Bourdonnais should not have made, in defiance of Dupleix's strongly expressed views. There was no immediate military consideration involved, and La Bourdonnais was about

to leave the coast, while his countrymen who remained would have to bear the consequences of his acts. Viewed dispassionately at this distance of time, and considering La Bourdonnais' questionable dealings, it is difficult to say that Dupleix was not fully justified in the course he adopted. The breach of the convention certainly did him much harm with the English, while the ungenerous side of his nature was shown in his ignominious treatment of Governor Morse and the principal English inhabitants of Madras, and his vindictive feelings against the English became known. Henceforth they regarded him as a man void of good faith and good feeling, one who was not bound by the ordinary standards in the conduct of public affairs. One result there was, destined to have an important bearing on future events. Among the prisoners in Madras was Robert Clive, a young writer who had come to India in the Company's service two years before. He, with half a dozen others, regarding themselves absolved by Dupleix's breach of faith from the parole they had given La Bourdonnais, and refusing to take a fresh parole from Dupleix, made

their way to the English settlement at Fort St. David, which now became the centre of English authority on the coast.<sup>1</sup> Clive's thoughts were thenceforth turned to military objects.

The most important result of all was the demonstration, afforded by Paradis' victory at S. Thomé, to English and French alike, of the feebleness of native armies. This feebleness had long been known, but so many years had elapsed since Europeans had measured themselves against any organised native force, and their attitude to native constituted authority had been so habitually submissive, that the total defeat of the Nawab's army by a handful of Europeans came as a new revelation. Henceforth all ideas on the subject required adjustment to a new focus.

Without troubling himself about the Nawab, Dupleix set to work to reduce Fort St. David, the last foothold of the English on the Coromandel coast, twelve miles south of Pondicherry. The garrison consisted

<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum on the capture of Madras, Clive states that he made his escape disguised "as a Dubash, and blackened" (Orme MSS.).

only of 200 Europeans and half that number of badly armed, undisciplined native peons. In their extremity the English appealed to the Nawab, who sent a force of 6000 horse and 3000 foot, which encamped five miles from St. David. On the  $\frac{8^{\text{th}}}{19^{\text{th}}}$  December a French force of 1700 men with field pieces and mortars, under M. de Bury, crossed the Pannar River and were settling themselves down, a mile from Fort St. David, when the Nawab's army, commanded by his two sons Mahfooz Khan and Mahommed Ali, suddenly appeared. In a panic, the Frenchmen seized their arms, recrossed the Pannar, and made their way back to Pondicherry as quickly as they could, leaving behind them a quantity of baggage and military stores.

On the  $\frac{30^{\text{th}} \text{ December}}{10^{\text{th}} \text{ January}}$  a second attempt was made to attack the place, in boats, on the sea face. But a high wind arising, the boats were obliged to put back, and the expedition ended abortively. Seeing that success against Fort St. David would be difficult so long as the Nawab remained friendly to the English, Dupleix set himself

to work to detach him from the alliance. He found little difficulty in persuading the Nawab that the French was the winning side, and, before the end of February, Mahfooz Khan visited Pondicherry, where he was well received: a treaty of peace was signed, and the Nawab's army withdrawn from Fort St. David.

The position of the English on the coast had now become critical. Since the capture of Madras, no assistance of any kind had reached Fort St. David. Two ships from England, conveying money and stores, had sailed into Madras roads in ignorance of the fall of the place, and were captured. A third that anchored off Fort St. David, on learning of the capture of Madras, sailed away for Bengal, refusing to land a single soldier of those on board. At last, in February, when affairs were becoming desperate, a fourth ship, after narrowly escaping capture at Madras, came to Fort St. David, and landed twenty recruits and £60,000 in silver, a supply of the greatest importance to the garrison. A fortnight later a French force, under Paradis, drove in the garrison and sat down before the place.

Had it appeared a few days earlier the fort would probably have fallen, but delay had been occasioned by the refusal of the French officers to serve under Paradis. He was an engineer, and therefore hardly regarded as a military man ; and as a Swiss was doubly unwelcome as a commander. By the time their reluctance was overcome, it was too late. A few hours after the arrival of Paradis' force, the English squadron sailed into the roads, and the French marched back to Pondicherry with great precipitation. Two additional ships under Admiral Griffin had arrived from England, and the command had been taken out of the hands of the incompetent Peyton.

With Griffin came 100 European soldiers ; and before long further reinforcements of Europeans, topasses, and sepoy came in from Bombay and Tellicherry. The employment of sepoy, that is of natives armed and drilled like European soldiers, occurred on the western coast long before they were made use of in Bengal or on the Coromandel coast. To Dupleix has sometimes been assigned the credit of first



employing them, which is not strictly due. Sepoys had been known on the west coast many years before their appearance on the Coromandel coast. The first mention of them in the French records is in 1744, when a company of sepoy, obtained from Mahe, were sent to Karikal. But the English records of Bombay show that sepoy were employed there in 1718; and it is not improbable that the credit of first drilling natives in the European fashion belongs to the Portuguese.

For six months the presence of Griffin's squadron preserved Fort St. David from attack, at a time when there was no officer present capable of commanding the garrison. So helpless were they that Captain Gibson of the Royal Navy was given the chief command on shore. The approach of the south-east monsoon forced Griffin to withdraw to Trincomalee, but, by making occasional demonstrations off Pondicherry, he prevented any attack being made on Fort St. David till he was again able to anchor in the roadstead, in January.

Soon after Griffin's first arrival in March, news had reached Fort St. David that the

French governors of Karikal and Madras were on their way to Pondicherry. A party was sent out to intercept them, and captured them twelve miles from Fort St. David. Negotiations were opened, and they were exchanged for Mr. Morse, the ex-governor of Madras, and another official. With Morse came his native interpreter, who, during his stay in Pondicherry, had been won over to French interests by Madame Dupleix.

In January (1748), there arrived from England Major Lawrence, an old officer of great, though as yet unproved merit, who was destined to play a prominent part in defeating Dupleix's schemes. Three months before his arrival, the native commandant of the sepoys from Tellicherry had been discovered to be in correspondence with Pondicherry. Before long, Lawrence discovered that Morse's interpreter was corresponding with Madame Dupleix, and had secured promises from several native officers to desert to the French, with their men, on the first engagement. The interpreter was hung, and eleven native officers were transported to St. Helena.

Early in June, Griffin put to sea in pursuit

of a French squadron that was steering for Madras, and Dupleix at once seized the opportunity for renewing his attacks: but the time had passed when the English might be deprived by a *coup de main* of their last foothold on the coast. On the  $\frac{6\text{th}}{17\text{th}}$  June a force of 800 Frenchmen and 1000 sepoys marched secretly to within three miles of Cuddalore, the town of Fort St. David, with the intention of making a night attack. Lawrence had intelligence of their project, and ostentatiously removed the guns and withdrew the garrison, giving out that the place was not tenable. At nightfall the guns were replaced, the garrison strengthened, and all made ready to resist an attack. At midnight the French advanced silently, and began to place their scaling ladders, when they were received with such a fire as struck panic into them, and they made their way back in haste to Pondicherry, having lost upwards of 200 men by death and desertion.

In reporting the capture of Madras to the Directors in Paris, Dupleix suggested three alternatives for its disposal. 1. That it should be retained by France till the end of

the war, to be exchanged for Louisbourg in Cape Breton, which had been captured by the English in June 1745. 2. That it should be restored to the English East India Company, by direct negotiation, on payment of a heavy ransom. 3. That it should be made over to a native prince, after demolition of the fortifications, on such conditions that it could not be restored to the English. It is indicative of the large views of which Dupleix was capable, that, having passed the whole of his official life in India, occupied almost entirely in commercial affairs, he should, at the outset of his career in important matters of policy, have taken into consideration the affairs of France in North America.

The French Directors chose the third alternative; directing him to exchange Madras for territory in the vicinity of Pondicherry in order to secure a fixed revenue, and to ensure the reversion of additional territory and revenue, in the event of the chief, to whom Madras was to be ceded, restoring it to the English. These instructions did not reach Dupleix till the autumn of 1748. He at once offered Madras

to Nazir Jung, who had just seated himself on the throne of the Deccan, asking in return that two districts in the vicinity of Pondicherry, yielding a revenue of forty or fifty thousand pagodas, should be given to France. Before the negotiations could be concluded, news was received of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and of the mutual restitution of all conquests made during the war ; so, to all appearances, the disposal of Madras was according to the first of Dupleix's suggestions. His choice of Nazir Jung for the future owner of Madras was probably made in order to provoke dissension between the Soobadar and the Nawab of Arcot. Though it was not in his instructions, he also entertained a project for making over the Carnatic to Chunda Sahib, or one of the late Dost Ali Khan's family, in revenge for Anwarooddeen's enmity, without consulting Nazir Jung. Yet Anwarooddeen was the recognised ruler of the Carnatic, with an unimpeachable title. The arrogance of his language at this time is remarkable : "*je suis maître, quand je le voudrai, de donner à qui bon me semblera,*" he wrote to the late Dost Ali Khan's treasurer.

Meanwhile, war had been brought to his gates. In July 1748 an English expedition, under Boscawen, arrived on the coast, from Europe, for the reduction of Pondicherry.

He brought with him over 2000 men of the King's troops; the Dutch furnished a small contingent of 120 men under Roussel, a renegade Frenchman, and the troops and sailors from Fort St. David brought the whole force up to a total of 3720 Europeans, 300 topasses, and 2000 badly armed and badly disciplined sepoys. The Nawab Anwarooddeen, anxious to revenge himself on the French, sent a small and useless body of 300 horse. After seven weeks' operations, in which Boscawen committed every blunder it was possible to commit, he was obliged to abandon the siege with the loss of over 1000 men, without having been able to push the attack within 800 yards of the place. The only important loss sustained by the French was in the death of Paradis, who was killed in a sortie. The diary of Ananda Ranga Pillay, with an account of all that passed in the town from day to day, shows that Boscawen's ignorance of land warfare, and the incom-

petence of his engineers, alone saved the place. Throughout the siege the native clerk's journal returns again and again to the iniquities of Madame Dupleix. She plundered the native population till the unfortunate townsmen asked themselves if the English could inflict greater wrongs on them than those they endured. She was responsible for the foolish sortie in which Paradis was killed. Those highest in authority next to Dupleix, amazed and shocked at what was being done, dared not remonstrate. When the siege was at an end, her peons, under pretence of pursuing the English, plundered the surrounding villages, and the lion's share of the plunder came to Madame Dupleix. Those who complained were beaten, imprisoned, or had their ears cut off by her orders, and a reign of terror was established among the native population. "Les habitants de la ville sont moins effrayés des bombes et des boulets que les ennemis font pleuvoir, que de pareilles injustices. Je ne sais comment décrire et comment évaluer cette terreur." Nor does the native clerk spare Dupleix, to whom he appears to have been attached, for the

weakness with which he allowed his wife to interfere in public matters and create disorder.

“On n’a jamais vu ni entendu dans le monde un homme plus crédule que Monsieur . . . Monsieur est très capable . . . Monsieur a acquis de la gloire ; puis il n’a pas réussi et a eu de la honte. C’est par le fait de sa femme ; celle-ci est un vrai diable qui terrorise toute la ville . . . Quoi qu’elle fasse, on tremble de peur de ses calomnies. Il y a quatre mois que M. Dupleix a perdu l’autorité et Madame l’a prise . . . Il est venu ainsi à Monsieur du déshonneur dont les causes sont multiples. D’abord il écoute les paroles de Madame. . . . En second lieu il a mis ici cent individus nommés ‘pions de Madame’ qui ne font que battre et voler ceux qui vont et viennent . . . Troisièmement, par les vexations de Madame, la ville a pris l’apparence d’un hameau où l’on vend des concombres.”

The subordinate officers and soldiers did their duty, but the clerk’s journal does not give the impression that Dupleix was the life and soul of the defence, as was afterwards said. “Présent partout, Dupleix était



à la fois administrateur, munitionnaire, artilleur, ingénieur et général." The description is Voltaire's, who is not a reliable authority on the details of occurrences in India. It is foreign to Dupleix's character, as he was not a man of action. The incapacity of the besiegers without was equalled by the confusion and terror within.

"Comparativement à l'inquiétude des Français, les Tamouls paraissent très courageux; cela se voit à leur mine défaite. . . .

"Si l'on s'occupe de ceux qui ont peur, on peut dire que les Tamouls ont cent fois plus de courage que les Blancs et les Blanches."

Plenty of Dupleix's opinions on the prospects of the defence, and orders with reference to supplies are recorded, but the diary is silent as to any active part he played in the defence. Despite his undoubted great abilities, Dupleix appears to have been devoid of any soldierly instincts, to such an extent that the French Company, after his recall, accused him of being wanting in personal courage: to which he is alleged to have replied, "que le bruit des armes sus-

pendoit ses réflexions, et que le calme seul convenoit à son génie."

For the successful defence of Pondicherry, Dupleix was granted the *cordon* of St. Louis, an order hitherto reserved for military officers of high rank. He was also nominated a Director of the Company.

Two months after the siege, hostilities came to an end by the announcement of a suspension of arms, shortly followed by the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. One article of the treaty contained a stipulation for a mutual restoration of all conquests made during the war; so Madras was restored to the English, while Louisbourg was restored to the French, much to the chagrin of New England. In old England also there was an outcry against the Government. "The British Ministers," wrote Smollett, "gave up the important isle of Cape Breton in exchange for a petty factory in the East Indies belonging to a private Company whose existence had been deemed prejudicial to the Commonwealth." This was very short-sighted criticism. The restoration of conquests was directed to objects more vital than Madras and Cape Breton. The High-

land rising that occurred during the war, had forced the English Ministers to withdraw their troops from the Austrian Netherlands, which had fallen into the hands of the French. The retention of the Low Countries by France would have constituted a perpetual menace for England, and their surrender to Austria was the real equivalent for the restoration of Cape Breton to France. The Government of England was wiser than its critics. The ownership of Louisbourg was settled, once for all, ten years later: the retention of Madras by the French would have seriously crippled us in India during the ensuing six years when Dupleix launched out on his career of conquest.

### III

THE war was over, and, to outward appearance, there was nothing to prevent the two Companies from settling down to their trade again. This, no doubt, was the view taken in London and Paris, but, in India, the agents of both Companies saw things in a very different light. The occurrences of the past three years had shown that the old conditions had disappeared beyond chance of restoration. The two nations had fought out their quarrel and made peace, without regarding the local powers, who had proved unable either to hinder or protect them. The one attempt at interference had been brushed aside contemptuously, and the weakness of native armies had been demonstrated. From the north no interference was to be apprehended. Ahmed Shah Abdali had invaded the Punjab and established himself at Lahore.

The Emperor had died (April 1748) of grief and vexation, and his successor was fully occupied in maintaining himself amidst the jarring factions of Delhi. The Imperial authority had disappeared from Southern India; the name alone remained, and was used to justify acts for which no other authority could be cited. Every pretender to power bolstered up his position by claiming Imperial recognition, and, in support of such claims, a system grew up of mock deputations bearing sham letters of authority with all the honours due to their pretended missions, impressing the common people, but deceiving nobody else. The aged Nizam-ool-Moolk had died (March 1748), and the Court of the Deccan was in a ferment over a contested succession. Chunda Sahib had reappeared, and was bidding for the Chiefship of the Carnatic; and Shahojee was again intriguing for the throne of Tanjore. All was confusion and anarchy. At Fort St. David, as well as at Pondicherry, it was seen that a new order of things had arisen, and that henceforth they could no longer maintain themselves as simple traders, but must play

their part in the great game before them, or lose their place in India altogether. Added to this there were, at both places, considerable bodies of troops, such as they had never had before.

The English were the first to move, without waiting for the completion of the formalities for the restitution of Madras, in accordance with the terms of the treaty of peace with France. The Governor was Charles Floyer, a weak, inefficient man, quite unfitted to cope with the novel conditions. Boscawen, with his squadron and the troops he had brought out from England, was the chief mover in what now took place.

By a curious coincidence that same Shahojee who, ten years before, had brought about the acquisition of Karikal by the French, now appeared as the *agent provocateur* to stir up the English to make their first conquest in India. He offered the English to make over to them the fort and district of Devicotah, and pay the expenses of the war, if they would place him on the throne of Tanjore; and the English consented.

At the end of March an expedition left Fort St. David to penetrate the Tanjore country, under the command of Captain Cope, though Boscawen kept the direction of affairs in his own hands. At the very outset it encountered a terrible disaster. A violent hurricane wrecked the camp and the ships of the squadron that accompanied its march along the coast. The *Namur*, seventy-four guns, one of the finest ships in the navy, was lost with all hands; the *Pembroke*, sixty guns, only six of the crew escaping; and the *Apollo*, hospital ship, with all hands. A delay at Porto Novo was necessary to repair damages. After a feeble skirmish with the Tanjore troops, and an equally feeble demonstration against Devicotah, the forces returned to Fort St. David.

The Council were now aware of the folly of the undertaking in which they were embarked. They had discovered that Shahojee had deceived them, and that he had no adherents in Tanjore. They had suffered severe losses in ships, men, and stores, as well as in military reputation. In order to repair their credit, and obtain something to show for their expedition, they resolved on the

capture of Devicotah, as a place of arms against Tanjore.

A second expedition was sent, this time by sea, under Captain Paulet of the *Exeter*, with Lawrence in command of the troops, and, after some severe fighting, in which Clive first became conspicuous by his gallantry, the place was taken. With the prospect of hard fighting before them, for which they were ill prepared, the English were suddenly relieved from their dilemma by the action of Dupleix. The chief of Tanjore, in view of an alarming state of affairs that had arisen in the Carnatic, where Chunda Sahib had reappeared as a claimant for the throne, opened negotiations for peace. Devicotah, with a district yielding 9000 pagodas of revenue, was ceded to the English, who on their part undertook to prevent any more trouble being made by Shahojee, to whom a pension was secured from Tanjore.

For seven years Chunda Sahib had been detained a prisoner at Satara, while his family remained under French protection in Pondicherry. Through them he had maintained correspondence with Dupleix, who used his



good offices to obtain his release. His efforts were at last successful by the aid of a loan of a lakh of rupees made to Chunda Sahib, who, early in 1748, left Satara, accompanied by his son Abid and a few friends, to seek his fortunes. The Directors in Paris approved of the loan, and expressed their opinion that if Chunda Sahib could obtain the Nawabship of the Carnatic it would be advantageous to French interests.

After some vicissitudes, not necessary to relate, in which his son Abid lost his life, Chunda Sahib, who had gathered a few hundred men, was unexpectedly joined by Mozuffer Jung, a claimant for the throne of the Deccan, with an army of 25,000 men.

At his death, Nizam-ool-Moolk left six legitimate sons. The eldest of these, Ghazi-oo-deen Khan, was at Delhi, holding an important office and wielding extensive authority. He was unwilling to leave Delhi, but had no intention of abandoning the rights to which he considered himself entitled as his father's heir. Nazir Jung, the second son, being on the spot, was

acknowledged by the army, and seized the throne of the Deccan. Ghazi-oo-deen Khan, who was recognised as the lawful heir by Imperial authority, contented himself with stirring up the Mahrattas to attack Nazir Jung. At the same time a third claimant appeared in Mozuffer Jung, the son of Nizam-ool-Moolk's favourite daughter, who claimed that his grandfather had appointed him his heir before death. Apart from the fact that the rulership of the Deccan was not yet hereditary, and that the matter was one for the Emperor at Delhi to decide, Mozuffer Jung's claim was worthless according to the Mohammedan law of succession; but, by allying himself with Chunda Sahib, who was a man of courage and ability, he became a prominent sharer in Dupleix's political schemes. Chunda Sahib agreed to recognise his title to the Deccan throne, and, in return, he promised to appoint Chunda Sahib Nawab of the Carnatic.

Early in July, while the English were still engaged in the Devicotah affair, the two adventurers invaded the Carnatic. Dupleix, with whom Chunda Sahib was in correspondence, made him a further advance of

money, and dispatched a body of French troops and sepoys to join him. The Nawab Anwarooddeen, who had taken up a position at Amboor, was defeated and slain, <sup>23rd July</sup><sub>3rd August</sub>; his eldest son, Mahfooz Khan, was taken prisoner, while Mahomed Ali, his second son, fled for refuge to Trichinopoly.<sup>1</sup> The victorious army marched to Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, where Mozuffer Jung assumed the state of Soobah of the Deccan, and formally appointed Chunda Sahib Nawab of the Carnatic. There they wasted valuable time that would have been better employed in disposing once for all of Mahomed Ali. The victory was won entirely by French troops under d'Auteuil, who stormed Anwarooddeen's entrenchment, while the troops of their allies looked on. It was on this occasion that Bussy, who was destined to play so conspicuous a part in Dupleix's schemes, first came into notice; and it was the news of Anwarooddeen's defeat and death that extricated the English from their embarrassments with Tanjore.

<sup>1</sup> According to M. Cultru, the battle was fought on the 1st August (N.S.).

M. Cultru shows that the victory of Amboor, so far from being the first step in a long-considered plan for the establishment of a French empire in India, was regarded by Dupleix as an episode that was now ended. One chief cause of satisfaction was his triumph over Anwarooddeen, whom he had never forgiven for siding with the English. "Je vais (faire) sentir à toute l'Inde que l'on se repent tôt ou tard d'être contraire à notre nation et de se lier avec nos ennemis," he wrote a few days before the battle.<sup>1</sup> He expected the dismissal of the French troops by Chunda Sahib, and wrote to d'Auteuil to be sure and secure a good share of the booty and of the ransom of notable prisoners. He did not know Chunda Sahib's plans, and distrusted Mozuffer Jung, "a leech that the new Nawab would find it difficult to satisfy." D'Auteuil ought not to leave Chunda Sahib so long as Mozuffer Jung was with him. He should advise Chunda Sahib to capture Chittapet and Chingleput, where there was much treasure, of which a good share would fall to the French. Like La Bourdonnais

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Machault, 28th July 1749 (Cultru).

at Madras, he had no idea beyond pay and plunder : so little did he anticipate the part that Mozuffer Jung was to play in his subsequent policy. D'Auteuil, on his side, was anxious to return to Pondicherry. He has been represented as being a good officer but incapacitated by advancing years and gout. He was, in fact, only thirty-five years old at the time.<sup>1</sup> He had been sent out to India, like many others, on account of youthful follies, and his chief aim was private commerce. His marriage to a sister of Madame Dupleix was his chief recommendation for the command conferred on him. According to Cultru, he had arranged to go to Mocha on a trading voyage, and took advantage of an attack of gout as a reason for returning to Pondicherry. To the Company, Dupleix, d'Auteuil, and every other Frenchman concerned, the whole affair of lending a body of troops to Chunda Sahib was purely mercenary, and calculated to advance commercial interests. There was no idea of an ulterior policy.

<sup>1</sup> The fiction of d'Auteuil being an old man, "broken by long disease," is due to Cartwright. Both he and Malleson have failed to notice that d'Auteuil was still in command in the field in May 1757.

Chunda Sahib and Mozuffer Jung visited Pondicherry, where they were received with great pomp and ceremony by Dupleix, who urged Chunda Sahib to march on Trichinopoly and dispose of Mahomed Ali. About eighty villages near Pondicherry were made over to the Company, thus securing the fixed revenue which the Directors had declared to be their object. Dupleix, Madame Dupleix, d'Auteuil, and an official named de Bausset each received a district. Seventy-five thousand rupees were distributed among the troops, a large part of which found its way into d'Auteuil's pocket, with Dupleix's approval.

This unexpected turn of affairs caused much perplexity at Fort St. David. Their own interference in Tanjore prevented the English from remonstrating with Dupleix, whose predominant position in the Carnatic filled them with apprehension. Boscawen counselled support being given to Mahomed Ali, but Floyer refused his consent. The Council were prepared to recognise Chunda Sahib or any *de facto* Nawab, so long as he was not under French influence. Some little satisfaction was found in the

evacuation of Madras, in August, by the French, in pursuance of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

In October, Boscawen sailed for England. Before he went, the survivors of the men and officers he had brought out with him for the siege of Pondicherry were allowed to volunteer for the Company's service. Eleven subaltern officers were in this way brought into the service; among them John Dalton and James Kilpatrick, who were destined to play no small part in coming events.

The day after Boscawen's departure, Duplex launched Chunda Sahib and Mozuffer Jung against Trichinopoly, rightly discerning the necessity of disposing of Mahomed Ali, whose title, in its way, was a better one than Chunda Sahib's. With them he sent a force of 800 Europeans, some sepoys, and a train of artillery. But Chunda Sahib and Mozuffer Jung were in desperate need of money to keep their large army together, and, immediately on entering Tanjore territory, they marched for Tanjore, and laid siege to the place, demanding an enormous sum of money. Had the matter

been left to the French, the capture of Tanjore would quickly have been accomplished, but Chunda Sahib preferred to manage matters in his own way, and allowed himself to be entangled in dilatory negotiations, while the Tanjore chief sent urgent appeals for assistance to the English and to Nazir Jung. The response of the English could not have been more feeble. They sent twenty men. For any practical purpose such a force was ridiculous, while it committed them as seriously as a larger force would have done. It marked the first meeting of French and English troops as allies of opposing native chiefs.

Impatient of delay, the French at last took matters into their own hands, and delivered an assault, which brought the Tanjore chief to terms, at the end of December. But he was not yet at the end of his resources. For several weeks he kept Chunda Sahib and Mozuffer Jung in play, by doling out the indemnity he had agreed to pay, in small sums, each payment being made the subject of prolonged disputes.

Hitherto nobody had paid much attention to Mozuffer Jung. Dupleix regarded him



with distrust, and had no wish to interfere in Deccan politics: his views did not reach beyond the Carnatic. Nazir Jung was occupied with opposing the machinations of his brother Ghazi-oo-deen at Delhi, and, at first, treated the pretensions of Mozuffer Jung with contempt. Mozuffer Jung, on his side, distrusted the French. He had little cause to expect that anything would be done for himself after Chunda Sahib was established in the Carnatic; so he secretly encouraged the Tanjore chief and Mahomed Ali in their resistance to Chunda Sahib. But, by assuming the title of Soobadar, and, in that capacity, granting the Nawabship of the Carnatic to Chunda Sahib, he had become an important factor in the political situation. While still engaged in wrangling over the payment of the Tanjore indemnity, they heard that Nazir Jung had entered the Carnatic at the head of an enormous army; that he had recognised Mahomed Ali as the rightful successor to Anwarooddeen, and had called on the English to assist him with troops. In a panic, Mozuffer Jung and Chunda Sahib marched away from Tanjore, and encamped in the vicinity of Pondicherry.

Thus, by the force of circumstances, the French were placed in the position of rebels against the ruler of the Deccan. They could not repudiate Mozuffer Jung without abandoning Chunda Sahib, who derived his title from him. Dupleix had no alternative but to champion the claims of Mozuffer Jung and fight it out. His correspondence at this time shows that he was ready to abandon Chunda Sahib and recognise Mahomed Ali, if he could have come to terms with Nazir Jung. To reassure them, Dupleix sent d'Auteuil to join Mozuffer Jung with 2000 French troops, and further assisted Chunda Sahib with a large sum of money.

Gathering numbers as it advanced, Nazir Jung's army, estimated at 300,000 men, encamped in sight of the French and their allies, fifteen miles from Pondicherry. Here they were joined by Major Lawrence and 600 English troops from Fort St. David. At this moment, when an engagement might momentarily be expected, the whole aspect of affairs was changed by an unforeseen occurrence. A mutiny broke out among the French officers, many of whom resigned their

commissions. The men followed suit, and Mozuffer Jung, in alarm, opened negotiations with the Soobah. Trusting to promises of honourable treatment, he ventured into Nazir Jung's camp, and was at once made a close prisoner, while his army was attacked and dispersed. Chunda Sahib took refuge in Pondicherry with the French, who lost many men in the retreat. In a moment Dupleix's schemes had seemingly fallen into ruins.

He at once entered into negotiation with Nazir Jung, professing his friendship and his dislike of war, but was unable to procure the recognition of Chunda Sahib. Though his overtures were rejected, they enabled him to gain an important advantage by the insight he obtained into the intrigues by which Nazir Jung was surrounded, and by enabling him to establish a correspondence with three discontented nobles of influential position in the Soobah's camp.

Meanwhile, matters had not been going well between Nazir Jung and his English allies. When asked to confirm a grant of land near Madras made to the English by Mahomed Ali, he prevaricated and demanded

that their troops should march with him to Arcot, which would have left the English settlements open to attack. A quarrel ensued, and Lawrence, a plain, straightforward soldier, marched his force back to Fort St. David. Nazir Jung, much exasperated against the English, broke up his camp and marched to Arcot.

To gratify his spite against the French, Nazir Jung then sent orders to close the French factories in the Northern Circars, of which Masulipatam was the most important. Dupleix, who had been promised the cession of Masulipatam by Mozuffer Jung, at once sent a detachment by sea to occupy the place and fortify it. He quickly followed this up by the capture of Trivadi, fifteen miles from Fort St. David. In spite of these insults, Nazir Jung remained in a state of apathy at Arcot, given over to pleasure, and lulled into security by false advisers. Mahomed Ali was, however, thoroughly alarmed and took the field with 20,000 men, calling on the English for assistance, and offering to defray all expenses. The English were only too ready to join him on such terms, and dispatched

a force of 400 men and 1500 sepoys, under Captain Cope, to his camp at Gingee. A skirmish of little importance took place at Trivadi, and then Mahomed Ali, losing heart, proclaimed his intention of moving northwards towards Arcot. This absurd idea was apparently prompted by a desire to collect revenue. As a military movement it was less than useless, as it would have exposed Fort St. David to attack. The English were ready enough to fight, but Mahomed Ali refused to make any move that would bring on a decisive action. On being pressed to fulfil his promise of defraying expenses, he first made excuses, and finally said he had no money; so Cope marched his men back to Fort St. David. The English were not yet prepared to burden the Company with the expenses of a war. While Dupleix, with a free hand, was advancing money to his allies, the English would not stir without payment for the war being secured to them. They had now a quarrel with each of their incompetent and shifty allies, in whose names they could alone protect their own interests, and were obliged to remain idle spectators of the contest in

which those interests were threatened with ruin.

Dupleix, who was closely watching events, at once reinforced d'Auteuil, and ordered him to attack Mahomed Ali. The camp was attacked and taken, the whole army dispersed without the French losing a man, and Mahomed Ali fled once more for safety to Arcot. Following up his advantage, Dupleix sent Bussy to capture Gingee, one of the strongest fortresses in the Carnatic. The remnants of Mahomed Ali's defeated army were encamped outside Gingee. Bussy overthrew them with ease, pursued the flying foe into the fortress, and captured it by a brilliant *coup de main*. The whole garrison was put to the sword, the Commandant only being spared.

These striking events roused Nazir Jung to action. The greater part of the enormous army he had brought with him from the Deccan had been dismissed, so, while awaiting reinforcements, he engaged in the game of negotiation so dear to Oriental princes. Dupleix replied by demanding terms that he knew could not be granted. His plans would now admit of no other

solution than that of war. By his intrigues in Nazir Jung's camp he had ensured the defection of half the Soobah's army, though every day's delay added to the chance of discovery of the conspiracy, with the certainty of death to the conspirators. Nazir Jung accordingly began his march with over 100,000 men, but as he approached Gingee he was stopped by the setting in of the rainy season, which rendered the country impassable for several weeks. Chafing at the delay, and impatient to return to the Deccan, he reopened negotiations, agreeing to concede everything that Dupleix had demanded, including the recognition of Chunda Sahib. The treaty was signed and duly ratified. The day after the ratification his camp was treacherously attacked by de la Touche, under orders from Dupleix, his army defeated, and himself slain by one of the conspirators <sup>5th</sup>/<sub>16th</sub> December. Mozuffer Jung was proclaimed Soobadar of the Deccan by de la Touche, on the field of battle. Mahomed Ali fled to Trichinopoly, whence he opened negotiations, offering to resign his claims to the Nawabship. By this decisive act Dupleix imposed his will on Southern India. The

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rulers of the Deccan and the Carnatic owed their positions to him: Mahomed Ali, protected by the walls of Trichinopoly, and supported by the friendship of the Mysore and Tanjore chiefs, alone opposed his pretensions.

Ten days after the battle Mozuffer Jung visited Pondicherry, where he was received with ostentatious pomp and ceremony. In full Durbar, Dupleix, in native costume, hailed him as Soobadar of the Deccan, presented a *muzzur*, and seated himself on his right. Mozuffer Jung, in return, created him a Haft hazari of the Deccan, commander of 7000 horse, conferred on him the highly prized honour of the Mahi Muratib,<sup>1</sup> and the empty but high-sounding title of his Viceregent in all India south of the Kistna. At the same time he confirmed Chunda Sahib in the Nawabship of Arcot. He also gave Dupleix the more substantial reward of Valdoor, with its dependent districts, and a jagir,<sup>2</sup> with a yearly revenue

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "the fish of dignities." A standard in the shape of a fish, conferred by the Moghul emperors only on chiefs of the highest rank.

<sup>2</sup> A jagir is a grant of land, to be held on such conditions as may be imposed at the time of the grant. Military service was generally the principal condition.



of a lakh of rupees. To the French nation he gave Dive, Nursapoor, and Masulipatam, with the privilege of coining money, and confirmed the grants made by Chunda Sahib. The treasures of Nazir Jung were brought to Pondicherry and distributed. They amounted to 120 lakhs of rupees, 22 chests of jewels, and a great quantity of silver-mounted horse-trappings. One-sixth was distributed among the officers and soldiers of the Pondicherry garrison. A sum of £50,000 was given to the French Company, and no less than £200,000, according to Orme, given to Dupleix.

While occupied with weightier matters, Dupleix ministered to his own vanity by founding the town of Dupleix Futtehabad, "The Town of Dupleix's Victory," on the field of Amboor, where Nazir Jung had been slain. It had but a brief existence, and could have been only a collection of huts when destroyed by Clive. The presence of the new Soobadar at his capital was urgently necessary, and without the support of French troops he feared complications. Dupleix placed at his disposal a compact force of 300 Frenchmen, 1500 sepoys, and

six guns, under Bussy, who was then ~~only~~<sup>3</sup> a simple captain of infantry, to be at his entire disposal. So little did Bussy anticipate the part he was destined to play, that it required a *douceur* of four lakhs of rupees to win his consent to go; the other officers were paid in proportion, and each French soldier received 700 rupees. Nor were these arrangements to continue beyond Hyderabad, so as to give Bussy a fresh opportunity for bargaining, in the event of the Soobadar still wishing to take him and his men to Aurungabad. Bussy and his army at this epoch were veritable soldiers of fortune as much as ever was Dugald Dalgetty; there was no pretence of advancing French interests. "Le détachement avait été fait pour aller jusqu'à Aurungabad, et les conditions n'avaient été faites que jusqu'à Édrebad pour fournir à Bussy *'l'occasion d'avoir de nouvelles conditions, seul objet qui m'ait fait prendre ce parti au lieu de celui d'abandonner Mousafer Sing,'*" wrote Dupleix from Gingee ten weeks later.<sup>1</sup> So little idea had he of any further developments, that he was quite

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Bussy, 5th April 1751 (Cultru).

prepared to leave Mozuffer Jung to take his chance.

Three weeks after leaving Pondicherry, Mozuffer Jung was slain by the feudatories with whom Dupleix had intrigued against Nazir Jung. This unexpected event placed Bussy in a great dilemma. He had never contemplated having to play a leading part in Deccan politics. He wrote to Dupleix that the choice for the Soobadari lay between the children of Mozuffer Jung (the eldest being only eight years old) and one of the surviving sons of Nizam-ool-Moolk. He suggested that it might be well for him and his troops to return to Pondicherry. On receipt of the news, Dupleix declared his preference for Salabut Jung, the eldest son of Nizam-ool-Moolk in the Deccan, subject to sufficient provision being made for the family of Mozuffer Jung. Confirmation of the grants made by Mozuffer Jung was to be insisted on. A demand for additional grants of land was to be made, and, if it appeared expedient, the districts of two of the rebel Nawabs were to be placed at the disposal of Dupleix, who would nominate the

governors. These conditions were to be accompanied by presents of jewels for Dupleix and his wife, "digne de celui qui nous les enverra et de ceux qui les reçoivent. Vous entendez ce que cela veut dire."<sup>1</sup> "Vous devez vous le faire présenter, et examiner s'il est tel qu'il doit être. Faites priser les bijoux avant de les envoyer. Vous devez les faire emballer en votre présence pour qu'on n'en détourne rien et en faire dresser un inventaire détaillé."<sup>2</sup> When they reached him he declared they were *pitoyable*. "Je n'eusse osé le recevoir publiquement si je n'y eusse fait ajouter pour au moins 200,000 roupies de bijoux."<sup>3</sup> Yet he considered 200,000 rupees sufficient for Salabut Jung to send to the King of France, with a letter announcing his accession.

Before the instructions could reach him, Bussy had already nominated Salabut Jung to the Soobadari. The success of this notable achievement in king-making, the ease with which it was accomplished, and the consciousness of being in command of a

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Bussy, 24th February 1751 (Cultru).

<sup>2</sup> Dupleix à Bussy, 12th May 1751 (*id.*).

<sup>3</sup> Dupleix à Kerjean, 27th June 1751 (*id.*).

body of troops capable of dealing with any opposition that might be offered, caused Bussy to exhibit so much pride and exaltation as to alarm Dupleix. He sent secret authority to his nephew de Kerjean, who was with Bussy, to take the command of the troops in the event of Bussy disobeying his orders. But Bussy continued his march with the new Soobadar, and the instructions given to de Kerjean were revoked. Soon after his arrival at Aurungabad, Bussy was instructed to obtain from Delhi the Imperial confirmation of all the dignities and possessions conferred by the Soobadar, and thus the object of his mission would be fulfilled. "Cette affaire mérite votre attention et votre séjour encore pour quelque temps à Aurungabad, puisque ces pièces, en nous assurant nos possessions, nos jaguirs, nos dignités, mettront le sceau à votre mission qui sera dès lors accomplie."<sup>1</sup> Before this letter could reach him, Bussy was writing to Dupleix to say that the Soobadar wished to retain the French troops in the Deccan, and that on such an important point he required positive instructions, as the object

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Bussy, 16th July 1751 (Cultru).

of his expedition had been fulfilled in seating Salabut Jung on the throne of the Deccan. In reply Dupleix sent him a formal order headed, "De par le Roi et la Compagnie des Indes," to remain at the disposal of the Soobadar till further orders.<sup>1</sup> The idea of keeping Bussy and his men indefinitely at Aurungabad had not been conceived till Bussy's demand for instructions was received. So far from having any fixed design, Dupleix's own writings show that his plans changed and developed out of ever-changing circumstances, and that at each stage he believed the end was in view.

Seven months after Bussy's departure from Pondicherry, Dupleix instructed him to demand an assignment of two lakhs of rupees a month on the revenues of the Carnatic. He preferred a fixed payment to any additional land that might be granted. Two months later he instructed Bussy to demand the Nawabship of the Carnatic, without the slightest regard for the claims of Chunda Sahib. In return he would engage to maintain 2000 European troops, ready to march anywhere, at Salabut Jung's

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoire pour le Sieur de Bussy.*

orders. Nor did his views stop here. He conceived the idea of getting the Soobadari of Bengal conferred on Salabut Jung, and opened negotiations with Delhi for that purpose. He demanded the cession of Balasore to the French, and instructed de Leyrit, the Governor of Chandernagore, to choose districts yielding two lakhs of revenue, and to press for their cession free of all charge. De Leyrit, in alarm, answered that such a demand would set Bengal in a blaze, and Salabut Jung showed himself lukewarm in regard to the Bengal Soobadari. In October 1751, Salabut Jung, whose position was menaced by his elder brother Ghazi-oo-deen Khan, granted to Dupleix for life, and to the French nation after his death, the Nawabship of the Carnatic, Madura, and Trichinopoly, with their dependencies, free of all payments. In consideration of this gift, the French were to regard the Soobadar as their friend and ally, and to defend him against all his enemies.

For a moment Dupleix thought of administering the Carnatic himself; but Bussy, who was already involved in difficulties at Aurungabad, counselled prudence, and

Dupleix contented himself with taking over the administration of a portion only, nominating Chunda Sahib as his representative in the Carnatic Nawabship. From the time of Mozuffer Jung's visit to Pondicherry Dupleix adopted the dress and style of an Eastern prince, "*cet appareil comique*," as Godeheu called it.

The gift of the Carnatic to Dupleix marks the zenith of his power and influence. It occurred at the very time when Clive was conducting his wonderful defence of Arcot. But Dupleix could see in Clive's success nothing more than a temporary cloud on the horizon which would soon be dispersed. In spite of the enormous advantages he had gained, and the certainty that what had been gained so easily would have to be defended, he had still other schemes. He urged the Company to establish themselves forcibly in Pegu and take advantage of local dissensions, but the Directors forbade the enterprise. He directed the Governor of Mahé to occupy two fortresses on the Malabar coast; but the Mahé troops met with a reverse. He also formed an alliance with the Rajah of Travancore in return for a



cession of land. But the Directors, taking alarm at the opposition of the English, refused their consent. He opened negotiations with Goa for a treaty of alliance, with the object of re-establishing the Portuguese at Bassein, which was in the possession of the Mahrattas, and S. Thomé, which was held by the English. The French Ministry absolutely forbade the undertaking, which must have necessitated war with the Mahrattas and the English. He wished to seize Surat, to make an establishment in the Maldives, and another in Cochin-China, by force of arms: to invade and conquer Tanjore because it was rich. It is small wonder that the Directors in Paris were filled with alarm as these projects were sprung on them one after another, in the course of a few months, while the Carnatic war was still in progress. They ordered Dupleix to recall his troops from Aurungabad, and to restrict his enterprises within more modest limits. On receiving the news of the gift of the Carnatic they wrote: "A peine vous nous proposez une affaire qui mérite, dites vous, toute notre attention, bien loin de nous donner le temps d'en

recevoir la nouvelle, d'y réfléchir et de vous en marquer notre sentiment, vous décidez seul et sans hésiter, . . . nous vous défendons très expressément de songer à cet agrandissement."<sup>1</sup> But Dupleix had the gambler's spirit, which must have all or nothing, and he turned a deaf ear. To enforce his views he dispatched d'Auteuil, by this time a prisoner on parole, to France, to talk over the Directors. But d'Auteuil had no plan to lay before the Directors. All he did was to sing the praises of Dupleix, and to declare that the war in the Carnatic was all the fault of the English. It was impossible, he urged, to recall Bussy from Aurungabad and leave Salabut Jung open to English intrigues. Opinion in France had been for some time turning against Dupleix, and the violent attacks of La Bourdonnais, which had at first been disregarded, had begun to secure a hearing.

Long before this, Carnatic affairs were absorbing the whole of Dupleix's attention and resources. At the eleventh hour the English at Madras had seen that they must

<sup>1</sup> La Compagnie à Dupleix, 2nd January 1753 (*Mémoire pour Dupleix*).

play the game in earnest or submit to be driven out of Southern India. They were roused to action by seeing French flags planted round Fort St. David for revenue purposes, some of them being contemptuously planted in the Company's boundaries.

A month after Nazir Jung's defeat and death two important changes had taken place at Madras. Mr. Thomas Saunders had taken up the Governorship, a man of moderate capacity, but tenacious and resolute in defence of the Company's interests, though his interference in military affairs was productive of much friction with the military commanders. The other change was of a less beneficial nature. Major Lawrence, whose sterling qualities were as yet unknown, resigned his seat in the Council, with his post in the Company's service, and sailed for England, wearied out with the constant vexatious interference in matters of discipline to which he was subjected. Clive had reverted to civil life, and the Council was left to muddle along in military matters in accordance with the old traditions of the Company.

The year 1751 saw the fortunes of the English Company at their lowest. Dupleix

was triumphant everywhere. Owing to their reluctance to appear as principals in the war, the English allowed their feeble efforts to be governed by Mahomed Ali's personal views and wishes, rather than by their own interests; and, under the incompetent leadership of Cope and de Gingens, a Swiss officer, they were unsuccessful everywhere. Mahomed Ali, in despair, made advances to Dupleix. In July, Chunda Sahib and a French force sat down before Trichinopoly, whose chief defenders were the disheartened and badly disciplined English troops under Dalton. The fall of the place appeared certain, in which case Mahomed Ali, on whom all the hopes of the English rested, would have shared the fate that befell Chunda Sahib a year later. In Madras the discontent among the military officers had reached such a height that the Council found it necessary to remove several of them, though they were unable to fill properly the vacancies thus created.

At this juncture the Council decided on making a last desperate cast for fortune. In July, Clive, who had again accepted a captain's commission, had successfully thrown a small reinforcement into Trichinopoly. On

his return he described to the Council the hopeless state of affairs in the place, and suggested an attack on Arcot as the only chance of drawing off the besiegers from Trichinopoly. The Madras Council listened to his advice, and denuded themselves of the last man that could be spared to furnish a force for the purpose. The circumstances of Clive's capture and defence of Arcot, with a handful of men, are too well known to demand repetition. It was the turning-point of the war. The pressure on Trichinopoly was relieved, the military reputation of the English revived, the active support of the Mysore chief and a Mahratta force were obtained for Mahomed Ali, and the military genius of Clive first recognised. Returning from Arcot, Clive defeated Chunda Sahib's son and a superior French force at Arnee, drove a French force out of Conjeveram, and returned to Madras in December with 600 French sepoys who had taken service with him. From this moment the English cast aside hesitation and prosecuted the war with resolution.

At the end of February 1752 Clive took the field again against Chunda Sahib's son,

who, accompanied by a French force, was ravaging the country round Madras. At Covrepauk he blundered on them in the dark, and, after a confused night engagement, completely defeated them, taking twelve guns and sixty prisoners. By these successes a large and valuable tract of country was recovered for Mahomed Ali. Dupleix, in his anger against Chunda Sahib's son at these successive defeats, would not, for a time, suffer him in his presence. On his way back to Fort St. David, Clive razed to the ground the infant town of Dupleix Futtehabad that Dupleix had founded the year before, on the spot where Nazir Jung was slain. This was done in no spirit of revenge, but as a deliberate stroke of policy against Dupleix's prestige, that could not be ignored or concealed.

Reinforcements had reached Fort St. David, and Clive was preparing to take the field again, when a notable accession of strength was unexpectedly received in the return of the veteran Stringer Lawrence from England, with the title of Commander-in-Chief and enhanced powers calculated to diminish some of the friction between the

civil and military officers. Lawrence at once took the command, and marched with Clive for Trichinopoly, to strike the blow that was to cause the ruin of Duplex.

The relations that existed between Lawrence and Clive have been much misunderstood. For Clive the old soldier entertained the warm feeling that an old bachelor might have for an adopted son, rather than that of a commander for a promising young officer, a feeling cordially reciprocated by Clive; and no little part of their coming success was due to the intimate friendship and confidence that existed between them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence has suffered in history owing to his modesty and self-effacement, together with his apparent dislike for putting pen to paper. The few letters from him that now survive are not written with his own hand, and are only authenticated by his signature. A few of his letters to Clive have recently come to light among the Orme MSS. On 30th November 1752 he writes: "As I'm persuaded however distant we are from each other our friendship is unalterable, I shall be always anxious for your well-doing, and the oftener I hear from you the more real satisfaction it will give, Dear Clive, to your affectionate friend, S. Lawrence." Again, on 19th February 1753, when Clive was preparing to embark for England: "If I write no more let this be my farewell epistle. I should have been rejoiced to see you once more, but since that is deny'd me by our confin'd situation, may you be happy in a pleasant passage, uninterrupted health, and the enjoyment of your friends, and let me hear of your welfare by every opportunity, as you shall certainly hear of

Lawrence's force, numbering 1500 men, of whom 400 were Europeans, left Fort St. David in March, for Trichinopoly, which had been invested by Chunda Sahib and a French force, commanded by Law, for eight months. Law, a good soldier but a bad general, allowed himself to be cooped up and blockaded on an island in the Cauvery River. Dupleix dispatched a force under d'Auteuil to his relief: Lawrence detached Clive and Dalton against d'Auteuil, who showed himself as timid and irresolute as Dalton and Clive were daring, and on <sup>29th May</sup><sub>9th June</sub> was forced to surrender with his whole detachment. Five days later Law, with 820 Europeans, 2000 sepoys, and 45 guns, together with the whole of Chunda

mine. Believe me, Dear Clive, with the greatest affection, your faithful friend, S. Lawrence." Three days later, in reply to a letter from Clive, he writes: "For God's sake why do you mention, why do you mention [sic] obligations to me. I never thought you under any, and the Proof you have given me that I was not deceived in my opinion of you from the beginning affords me much satisfaction." There can be little doubt that Lawrence's affection influenced Clive in adopting a military career, and Clive's selection for the command of the troops sent to Bengal in 1756 to retrieve the Calcutta disaster, must have been largely due to Lawrence's influence. Lawrence's death, six weeks after Clive's suicide, was probably hastened by that event.



Sahib's army, were obliged to capitulate to Lawrence; an event that was quickly followed by the death of Chunda Sahib at the hands of the Tanjore general.

This staggering blow was the ruin of Dupleix, though more than two years were to elapse before the indignation of the Government and Directors in Paris could make itself felt. He was not easily daunted. The opportune arrival of the annual fleet from France brought him reinforcements: he dexterously detached Mysore and the Mahrattas from their alliance with Mahomed Ali, and proclaimed Chunda Sahib's son, Ali Reza Khan, Nawab of the Carnatic. A momentary success was obtained by the repulse of an English force sent to recover Gingee, and he blockaded the English settlement of Fort St. David, by land, with a force under de Kerjean. In order to strengthen the garrison, 200 Swiss were sent down from Madras in open boats. While passing along the coast, Dupleix swooped down on them, and carried them prisoners into Pondicherry.

Of all the acts of Dupleix the two that most exasperated the English were the annulling of La Bourdonnais' convention

for the restoration of Madras, and the capture of the Swiss. Both acts were regarded as breaches of faith. England and France were at peace, and the only justification for the fighting in India was as auxiliaries of rival native princes. And so a tacit understanding existed that there should be no direct attack on each other's territories. In blockading Cuddalore and Fort St. David the French troops had not infringed on English limits. The sea was regarded as neutral, and beyond the scope of native interests, so the capture of the Swiss was regarded in Madras as an act of piracy, and in England as an act of international war. This brought Lawrence into the field again. He took ship at once for Fort St. David, resolved to break the land blockade. De Kerjean, under orders from Dupleix,<sup>1</sup> broke up his camp and retreated to within the French limits of Pondicherry, followed by Lawrence. Here he was safe from attack, as Lawrence, under orders from Madras, adhered to the understanding that French territory should not be violated. After driving in the Villanoor outpost, in the hope

<sup>1</sup> Hamont.

of bringing on an engagement, Lawrence marched back to Bahoor, two miles from Fort St. David. Against his judgment, de Kerjean was forced by Dupleix to follow, upon which Lawrence fell upon him and destroyed his force, taking de Kerjean prisoner, after a hot contest, in which the French troops behaved with great bravery.<sup>1</sup> After Bahoor, they never again, during the war, faced the English in the field with confidence.

Malleison, in his admiration for Dupleix, lays the whole responsibility for the battle on de Kerjean, because delay was advisable in view of the expected arrival of reinforcements from Europe. Dupleix, who was never backward in laying blame on others, never sought to blame de Kerjean. In view of the positive assertions of Lawrence and Orme that de Kerjean was forced to follow Lawrence against his wish, and seeing that de Kerjean was at the time in hourly communication with Dupleix, who had ordered his retirement a few days before, it is in the highest degree improbable that so masterful a man as Dupleix would have allowed him

<sup>1</sup> The battle was fought, 26th August (6th September) 1752.

to leave the confines of Pondicherry, where he was safe from attack, against his wishes. De Kerjean's move was in consonance with the impetuous nature of Dupleix, ignorant of military affairs, and full of confidence in himself, and it is particularly stated by Hamont that he kept de Kerjean under his control. The ease with which Madras had been captured by La Bourdonnais, and the successful defence of Pondicherry against Boscawen, in which he had borne a part, had led him to undervalue the fighting powers of the English. In point of fact, delay would have made no difference in the situation, as the reinforcement never arrived.<sup>1</sup>

It was at this time, when Dupleix was smarting under defeat, that letters were being written to him in France to tell him that the King had been pleased to attach the title of Marquis to the estate he was then purchasing<sup>2</sup> in France.

<sup>1</sup> The *Prince* sailed from L'Orient in February, was nearly wrecked, and had to put back, so that it did not finally leave France till 10th June. In July it was burnt off the coast of Brazil. According to Cultru, only 122 soldiers perished with La Touche.

<sup>2</sup> *Mémoire pour Dupleix contre la Compagnie des Indes.*

The series of events, commencing with the capture of the Swiss at sea, that culminated in the French defeat at Bahoor form an episode in the war apart from all the rest of it. For a few days, both English and French discarded the fiction that they were only auxiliaries in a native quarrel, and stood arrayed in arms against each other, as principals, without native allies.

Dupleix was probably the only Frenchman in India who now failed to see the dangers of the policy in which he had embarked. During the past year he had suffered a severe check at Arcot, and two crushing defeats in the field, and nearly 1000 of his best men were prisoners either with the English or with Mahomed Ali. Three months after Bahoor, Bussy wrote to him from the Deccan stating the alarm he felt at the terrible loss of reputation suffered by the French. "*Cédez au tems, Monsieur, faites une paix la moins désavantageuse qu'il se pourra avec les Anglois et Mahamet Ali. . . . Si vous vouliez m'en croire, Monsieur, vous songeriez à rendre le calme et la tranquillité à ces malheureuses Provinces, qui en ont si grand besoin. . . .*"

Je vous le repète, Monsieur, il est tems de vous tirer de cet labyrinthe.”<sup>1</sup>

It may safely be assumed that serious war with the English had no place in Dupleix's plans when he first interfered in Carnatic politics. Either he counted on their standing idle till events had gone too far for them to retrieve their position, or he despised their power so much as to leave it out of his calculations. He did nothing to conciliate or hoodwink them. He continued to believe that the capture of Trichinopoly would settle everything, so the war resolved itself into a struggle for the possession of that place. Yet its importance was of so secondary a nature that Lawrence was at this very time advising the Madras Council to give it up to Mysore.

Up to this time the English had maintained the principle that they were only acting under the orders of Mahomed Ali. When Dupleix wrote to Madras claiming the release of the French prisoners taken at Trichinopoly, they replied that the prisoners belonged to the Nawab. At their instance, after Law's surrender, Mahomed Ali offered peace to Dupleix,

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoire pour le Sieur de Bussy.*

who refused to entertain the proposal. The Madras Council then recorded their resolve to push on military operations with vigour till an honourable peace was procured.

The year 1753 saw the departure of Clive, who was forced to leave for England, on account of ill health, in the middle of March. But Lawrence was a tower of strength, and in the course of the year he was joined by some excellent officers from the King's army, who entered the Company's service, attracted by the news of fighting in India. French efforts were mainly directed to the capture of Trichinopoly by blockade, while the efforts of the English, with inferior forces, were directed to the breaking of the blockade, from time to time, and keeping the place provisioned. On the 26th June, Lawrence defeated the French, under Astruc, at the Golden Rock. On the 9th August, he defeated Brenier at the Sugar Loaf Rock. On the 21st September, he fell upon Astruc's camp in the same place, capturing Astruc<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Astruc was a man of considerable ability. He had been a *sous lieutenant* in the French grenadier company, and distinguished himself during Boscawen's siege of Pondicherry. He was dangerously wounded in the sortie in which Paradis was killed.

himself, nearly 200 French prisoners, with 11 pieces of cannon, and totally destroying his force.

The most notable achievement of Dupleix during the year was the dexterity with which he deprived Mahomed Ali and the English of their native allies, and maintained his influence at Aurungabad. Salabut Jung's seat on the Deccan throne had been secured by the poisoning of his brother Ghazi-oo-deen, at the hands of Salabut Jung's mother,<sup>1</sup> and by the defeat of the Mahrattas, stirred up by Ghazi-oo-deen, at the hands of Bussy. Through Bussy's exertions a grant had been obtained at the end of 1752, from the Soobadar, of the five provinces of Condavir, Mustaphanagar, Ellore, Chicacole, and Rajahmundry,<sup>2</sup> which, added to Masulipatam and its dependencies, and known as the Northern Circars, made Dupleix master of 600 miles of sea coast, with a revenue of over half a million sterling; the greatest dominion

<sup>1</sup> October 1752.

<sup>2</sup> These districts were granted for the pay and subsistence of the French troops that were under Bussy's command in the Deccan. Bussy retained their administration in his own hands, and they did not suffer from the peculation and dishonesty that did so much harm in the Carnatic districts under Dupleix.



both in extent and value that had ever been possessed by any European nation in India.

With this notable acquisition in his hands, Dupleix would have been wise to come to terms with the English over affairs in the Carnatic. It would have been practically impossible for the English to challenge his possession of the Northern Circars, backed up as he would have been by the Soobadar's arms; while the difficulty he experienced in finding a suitable successor to Chunda Sahib, in the Carnatic, made it all the more expedient for him to recognise Mahomed Ali. After Chunda Sahib's death, he had proclaimed his son, Ali Reza Khan, as Nawab of the Carnatic, but in a few months was obliged to set him aside on account of his incapacity. He then selected Mortaza Ali Khan<sup>1</sup> for the Nawabship, but he proved equally useless, and, after Dupleix's departure from India, tacitly relinquished the office. No such opportunity was to occur again for securing his position.

In July 1753, the Madras Council had learned by letters from England that a feeling against Dupleix was growing up in

<sup>1</sup> The brother-in-law and murderer of Sufdar Ali Khan.

France. They again addressed him regarding the termination of the war on terms advantageous to both parties, and were empowered by Mahomed Ali to treat in his name. But Dupleix only gave an evasive answer, declining to put his proposals in writing.

It was now that Dupleix for the first time put into shape the aims he had in view, in a dispatch to the Directors dated 16th October 1753. The tradition that his acts were in accordance with a long-considered policy is conclusively disposed of by this document, in which he shows how his successive acts were the result of circumstances that could not have been foreseen. He lays down two principles "*vérités qu'une longue expérience m'a présentées.*" 1st. That no trading Company can exist solely by trade, and that it must have a fixed and assured revenue, especially if it is obliged to maintain large establishments. 2nd. That a Company should avoid as far as possible the necessity of exporting silver or gold from its European base. He alludes to the English, Dutch, Portuguese, and Danish Companies; not very felicitously, as the first two had always

paid their way and made substantial profits :<sup>1</sup> and he relates how the French establishments had cost more than they earned. " Avec un revenu fixé, les chefs de l'administration dans l'Inde ne se trouveront plus à la veille de mettre la clef sous la porte et de congédier les troupes et les employés. Ils n'auront pas le chagrin d'entendre des propos plus fâcheux les uns que les autres, et des officiers dire sans honte Point d'argent, point de Suisses. . . .

*" Des occurrences que la dernière guerre a présentées ont servi à faire apercevoir des objets auxquels on n'eut jamais pensé, par la raison qu'on ne pouvait se persuader de la possibilité. Un enchainement de circonstances qu'on aurait eu de la peine à prévoir a cependant conduit au but que l'on cherche depuis longtemps. L'on a saisi toutes les occasions qui se sont présentées. . . . Il serait poussé à sa perfection si j'avais été mieux secondé, non seulement ici, mais de ma patrie. Malgré ces contretemps, je suis venu à bout de procurer à ma nation un*

<sup>1</sup> In spite of the loss of Madras, the English East India Company paid dividends of eight per cent. for the years 1744 to 1748 inclusive. From 1730 to 1744 the Dutch Company had paid dividends varying from fifteen to twenty-five per cent. (Mill).

revenu d'au moins cinq millions. Mon dessein était de la pousser à dix millions." He admits that the idea of extending French dominion in India, and of expelling all European rivals had sprung into existence during the late war with England, but that circumstances that could not have been foreseen had alone brought the realisation of the idea within the range of possibility. Three weeks later he was writing contemptuously of the Directors: "Il est difficile de faire changer d'idées à des personnes qui n'ont été habituées depuis de longues années qu'à des idées trop bornées."<sup>1</sup>

His plan, as stated by himself, in October 1753, was to procure a fixed revenue for the Company in order to make them independent of trade. This would enable them to sell Indian products in Europe at a rate that would be impossible for the English to vie with, and thus bring about the ruin of the English Company. Not a word about interference in native politics, of offering protection to native chiefs in order to make puppets of them: not a word of excuse for disobeying the Company's stringent orders

<sup>1</sup> Dupleix à Montaran, 9th November 1753 (Cultru).

to recall Bussy and the French troops from Aurungabad. All that was necessary was that an additional force of 2500 men should be sent to him. With 5000 men he would give the law to all India. The fact that the English in India were opposing him in the field, that the two nations were at peace, and that his projects could only be carried out at the cost of war in Europe, was not taken into account.

The charge against the French Directors of not supporting Dupleix in his plan of forming a French empire in India cannot be sustained, for the simple reason that he had never placed any such plan before them. His first communication of a considered plan was not written till two months after the determination to recall him had been formed in Paris.

In November, the Madras Council again made overtures for the termination of hostilities, through Syud Lashkar Khan, the Dewan at Aurungabad, who was opposed to Bussy and French influence. Dupleix absolutely refused to acknowledge Mahomed Ali's title to the Carnatic, but the increasing difficulties in which he found himself made

him not unwilling to consider the advisability of a conference which was proposed to be held at Sadras, the Dutch settlement between Madras and Pondicherry. A little before this he had received a letter from Bussy giving an account of the increasing difficulties he experienced in the Deccan, and stating among other circumstances that pay to the amount of nine lakhs of rupees was owing to his men. At this stage a French attempt to surprise Trichinopoly met with a disastrous defeat which cost them nine officers and over 400 men.<sup>1</sup> Dupleix now consented to send Commissioners to Sadras, and nominated Père Lavour,<sup>2</sup> Superior of the Jesuits in India, de Bausset, a member of the Pondicherry Council, and his nephew de Kerjean, to meet the two English Commissioners, Palk and Vansittart. Even after the arrival at Sadras of the English deputies, Dupleix delayed the dispatch of his representatives, on the ground that the passes provided for them were written in English and not in Persian. The Madras Council replied that

<sup>1</sup> 27th November 1753.

<sup>2</sup> According to Voltaire and Saint Priest, Lavour played a double game between Dupleix and Godeheu, and by his unfair insinuations greatly contributed to Lally's condemnation.

the excuse was frivolous and an indignity to the English nation, and Dupleix gave way.

On the first day of the meeting of the Commissioners, the English deputies wrote to Madras that there was no prospect of an agreement; and at the end of eleven days, after two meetings only, the conference was broken off. The terms demanded by Dupleix could only have been justified by constant success in the field. He insisted on a recognition of his title as Nawab of the Carnatic, and the time was chiefly occupied by a fruitless controversy as to the authenticity of documents, which is only interesting as showing the anxiety of both French and English to legalise their *status* by appealing to the effete authority of the Moghul Emperor. The English insisted on the recognition of Mahomed Ali as Nawab of the Carnatic, rightly recognising that with the Nawabship in French hands their trade must be destroyed.

In reading the whole proceedings of the Commissioners it is difficult to believe that Dupleix seriously expected to come to terms. His real object would appear to have been to ascertain if the English were likely to

listen to proposals that would result in their abandonment of the cause of Mahomed Ali, and to obtain the release of the French prisoners. The mutual restoration of prisoners was proposed by the French deputies as a preliminary step to an agreement. The English deputies replied that it must form part of the agreement itself. A few days after the conference Dupleix scored his only important success in the field against the English. A valuable convoy was captured, and 230 of the best English troops destroyed, 15th February 1754.

For six months more the war lingered on, but the only result was to make evident the decreasing power of the French. Dupleix had got to the end of his resources; his soldiers, disheartened by defeat, faced the English with hesitation that was fatal to success, and his commanders were discredited. Nor were French affairs going better in the Deccan. From Bussy came a series of urgent letters complaining that nothing could be got from the Soobadar, that he had parted with all he himself possessed to pay his troops, that in spite of repeated demands nothing had been sent him from Pondicherry,



and that officers and men were in great distress and ready to mutiny. "La gloire du nom Français est arrivée à son dernier période," wrote an officer to Dupleix. He was visibly losing ground everywhere.

Meanwhile, the feeling in France against Dupleix was increasing. The great riches he had acquired for himself and family, exaggerated by rumour, his indifference to the Company's orders, his concealment of important matters, and the insolent style of his letters to the Directors, all contributed to raise their apprehension and anger. "On n'écrit pas à un valet comme vous avez écrit à la Compagnie," wrote one of his friends to him.<sup>1</sup> His subordinates, alienated and disgusted by his haughtiness and arrogance, were loud in their complaints against him. Assuming the style of an Eastern monarch, he forced them to present *nuzzurs* when they approached him, and more than once, according to Orme, he obliged his own countrymen to submit to the humiliation of paying him homage on their knees. The same is charged to him by Godeheu: "M'a t'on vû me montrer tous les jours en public

<sup>1</sup> Montaran à Dupleix, 3rd March 1754 (Cultru).

avec ce faste imposant, ce cortège nombreux, et toutes les marques extérieures de la Nababie. . . . M'a t'on vû quitter l'habit et le chapeau, me revêtir d'une cabaye et d'un turban, et recevoir le *salami* de la main des Français?" Dupleix denied ever receiving *nuzzurs* from Frenchmen. When he sustained his check at Arcot he hurried the sailing of the *Dauphin* so that the officers should not hear of it and report it in France. In like manner he hastened the departure of other ships when the news of Mozuffer Jung's death reached him, and the Directors complained that they received from England news of events that Dupleix might have sent them. The Company's funds were exhausted, and the Directors complained that they received no returns for the sums they had sent out. The books showed that there ought to be immense sums at their credit in India, but they were told there was nothing. Yet Dupleix pretended that up to the end of 1752 only ten lakhs of rupees had been advanced for army expenses, which would be repaid when peace was made. In pursuit of his political aims he had completely lost sight of the Company's commercial interests. If

his policy was successful there would be plenty of money to make good all deficiencies. The Ministry and the public held Dupleix responsible for their want of dividends. All complaints might have been put an end to by success, but the news of Law's surrender silenced Dupleix's defenders, and his recall was decided on.

So far back as the autumn of 1751 proposals for the recall of Dupleix had been laid before the French Ministers, long before the news of the active opposition of the English was known to them. At that time the death of Nazir Jung was known, but they were still ignorant in France of the dispatch of Bussy to Aurungabad. The general feeling was against territorial extension, and in favour of peace and commerce. But there grew up a feeling of personal hostility to Dupleix, coupled with a suspicion that his loyalty could not be depended on. As an official document said at the time: "*C'était un rôle séduisant, pour un particulier sorti du commerce et devenu gouverneur de Pondichery que celui de conquérant et d'arbitre de l'Inde. Il pouvait même y trouver, du côté de la fortune, des avantages particuliers.*"

The enormous sums of which Dupleix, his family, and so many of the French officers were in receipt seemed to render them rather the servants of their native paymasters than of the French Directors, and Godeheu was suggested as the fittest person to succeed Dupleix. A few months later proposals were placed before the Ministers for coming to an agreement with the English and Dutch Companies, ensuring neutrality in India under all circumstances, and for a common undertaking not to acquire territory. The news of Law's surrender appeared to justify Delaitre, one of the Syndics, and Silhouette, one of the royal commissioners, who had prophesied disaster. The Company wrote to Dupleix with dignity and moderation. Before the news of Law's disaster arrived, they had ordered him to make peace and withdraw Bussy from the Deccan. They now sent him 1400 men to enable him to defend himself, and told him they relied on his having already made peace before the reinforcement, which was not to be employed in new enterprises, could arrive. To Dupleix the reinforcement furnished a motive for going on with the game. Like a confirmed

gambler, he was always ready to double the stakes. At this time he was sending rich presents to Madame de Pompadour and other great ladies, in the name of Madame Dupleix, to influence them in his favour.

The affair that did Dupleix most harm in France was the matter of the presents and jagirs granted to himself, his wife, and other officials. In 1750, the Directors, dealing with the question of the jagir granted to Dumas, had reminded Dupleix that the receipt of gifts by French officials from foreign princes was strictly forbidden by royal ordinance. Now they heard, by private persons coming from India, of the immense gifts of land, money, and jewels showered on Dupleix and his subordinates. Between January and July 1751 Bussy received in money alone 780,000 rupees. In six months of the same year de Kerjean remitted 380,000 rupees to Pondicherry from Aurungabad. Captains of infantry under Bussy received from 25,000 to 40,000 rupees in a year. Dupleix himself had three large jagirs, besides money and jewels of great value. Madame Dupleix had received four valuable jagirs, one of which she gave to the Jesuits,

and one she surrendered to the Company. Her daughter had a jagir; her son received a lakh of rupees in a single day; Portuguese hangers-on, who claimed relationship with her, had districts. In the Carnatic thirty-two districts were administered by Dupleix's agent for different employés. The enormous sums acquired by obscure individuals of no merit produced widespread demoralisation among all classes, and had a powerful effect in bringing about the final collapse of French power in India a few years later. Instead of checking it, Dupleix boasted of the fortunes that were being made, and sent officers to the Deccan "*pour faire leurs petites affaires.*" On receiving the Directors' order about Dumas' jagir, Dupleix wrote a remonstrance as if no royal order existed. The Directors repeated the order more stringently. Dupleix replied in a letter full of insolence, accusing the Directors of having procured a royal order expressly for the occasion. But he was on his way to France before they could make any rejoinder.

## IV

AT the beginning of the contest the Directors of the two Companies were puzzled by the conflicting charges and counter-charges they received from Madras and Pondicherry. Neither in London nor Paris was the affair regarded as serious, and the Directors exchanged informal communications and copies of their advices from India. The French Directors naturally, at first, supported Dupleix, whose successful defence of Pondicherry had made him a popular favourite; the English Directors were conscious that, in the Devicotah affair, they had laid themselves open to recrimination. On receiving the news of the victory at Amboor the French Directors were warm in their congratulations to Dupleix. On hearing of the capture of Gingee by Bussy, their congratulations were less cordial, and accompanied by the reflection that unless the success had led to a solid peace it was

of little value : a sentiment that was repeated from several quarters. The news of the defeat and death of Nazir Jung at the hands of a French force, and what followed it, roused them from their complacency. They became aware that a great deal was going on of which Dupleix was keeping them in ignorance. The employment of French arms against the ruler of the Deccan could not be laid to the blame of the English, for the English had withdrawn from his camp. The dispatch of Bussy to Golconda was inexplicable. In January 1753, the English Directors made a formal representation to the Earl of Holderness, the King's principal Secretary of State, forwarding copies of letters written by Dupleix to Madras, "wherein the pretensions and claims of M. Dupleix, in the name of the French nation, appear, and entreating his Lordship's recommendation of the affair to His Majesty's Ministers, that they may obtain such declarations and orders from the Court of France as may sufficiently discountenance and put a stop to M. Dupleix's proceedings." A formal communication based on this reached Paris just when the news of Law's surrender



was known, and the advisability of recalling Dupleix was being considered by the French Directors. In March, they notified to the English Directors that they were sending Duvelaër and de la Lude to London, to consult with the Secret Committee, and confer on means to re-establish tranquillity in India. They declared that they were disposed to do anything that might contribute to that end.

Malleson has treated Duvelaër's deputation to London as if he had been originally instructed to maintain Dupleix's policy. This was not the case. The negotiation was at first between the two Companies, and not between the French and English Governments. The Directors of both Companies were in accord as to the general principles to be observed in future. The chief point on which disagreement seemed likely to arise was from the difficulty of placing both Companies on an equality in India for the future, in view of the large acquisitions of the French. So far was the negotiation from being of a contentious nature at first, that it caused some alarm in Holland,<sup>1</sup> where it was

<sup>1</sup> Sir J. Yorke's letter to the Duke of Newcastle (The Hague, 22nd June 1753, MSS. Brit. Mus.).

thought to forebode common action against other European traders.

The choice of Duvelaër showed the intentions of the French Directors. He had spent several years in England and Holland studying English and Dutch commercial systems. He had no personal feeling against Dupleix, but he was averse to a trading Company mixing itself up in politics and acquiring territory. While negotiations were in progress, it came to be recognised in London that the fighting in India was no passing incident, such as had happened before between European traders in the East, but was due to a policy that would, if successful, prove fatal to English trade; and the professions of the French Directors were received with distrust. It was known that the French Company were raising 2000 men to dispatch to India with M. Godeheu, the Managing Director of the *Compagnie des Indes*' naval establishment at L'Orient, though the English Ambassador reported that M. Godeheu was said to have absolute power and orders to make peace, and if M. Dupleix opposed it, to send him immediately to Europe. On the receipt, in

London, of intelligence of the continuance of fighting in India, the King's Ministers intervened in the negotiation; the French ambassador, the Duc de Mirepoix, was informed by the Earl of Holderness of the King's resolution to support the English East India Company in the full enjoyment of all the rights and privileges granted them by royal charter,<sup>1</sup> and the 39th Regiment, the one that now bears the motto of "Primus in Indis," was prepared for embarkation.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of January 1754 the Duc de Mirepoix was told that eight line-of-battle ships with five frigates were preparing to sail in a fortnight for the East Indies.<sup>3</sup> At the same time he received instructions from the French Ministry to conclude a

<sup>1</sup> East India Company's records.

<sup>2</sup> In its ranks were Forde, who drove the French out of the Northern Circars; Coote, who defeated Lally and took Pondicherry, dying thirty years later as Commander-in-Chief in India; together with Carnac, Adnett, Yorke, and many others who bore their part in the hard fighting that was to come.

<sup>3</sup> This was the squadron that sailed from Plymouth on 9th March, under Admiral Watson, that destroyed Gheriah and Chandernagore, and recovered Calcutta. It may be truly said that the favourable position in which the English in India found themselves on the outbreak of the Seven Years' War was directly due to Dupleix's aggressive policy.

treaty between the two Companies, conceding the points on which the English Company, backed by the King's Government, insisted. Before this, Godeheu was on his way to India.

There can be little doubt that long before the news of Law's defeat and surrender was known, there was considerable excitement in England over the fighting in India. Many were the petitions from officers in the King's army to the East India Company for commissions in India. In a single day, in November 1752, the Company granted fourteen commissions to captains and subalterns of the Royal Army, having among them men who had fought in Germany and Scotland. There was no lack of readiness in the English Government or the English nation to take up the challenge thrown down to them in India. Yet the whole contention of Dupleix's admirers is based on the assumption that if the French Company had supported Dupleix, England would have acquiesced in the domination of the Carnatic by France.

The recognition of Mahomed Ali as Nawab of the Carnatic, and the surrender

to him of a portion of the territory acquired by the French, were the points on which the English Ministers refused to give way. In the event of Mahomed Ali's death before Godeheu's arrival they demanded that both companies should, in concert, request the Moghul Emperor to nominate a successor. They were indifferent as to who the successor should be, provided he was not the nominee of the French. They also insisted on the unconditional surrender of the Swiss captured at sea, as a preliminary to negotiation, and were prepared to treat it as a *casus belli* if there was any hesitation in the matter.

Malleson, in his *History of the French in India*, and M. Hamont, have stated the recall of Dupleix to have been brought about chiefly by the insistence of the English Directors, who tricked the French Directors into the belief that they would on their side recall Saunders if Dupleix was recalled. Dupleix himself believed that his recall had been obtained by the English, and dwells on it with much bitterness in his *Mémoire contre la Compagnie*. Yet in another place he writes: "le coup est l'ouvrage du Sieur

Godeheu seul." M. Cultru shows that there is no foundation for these assertions. "Les Français n'eurent pas la triste excuse d'être forcés par l'Angleterre à rappeler Dupleix. Il était attaqué depuis longtemps. Personne ne le défendait, sauf le directeur Gilly. . . . Le coup fut porté par Silhouette qui dirigeait l'esprit de Machault. Un mémoire, présenté en Juillet 1753, suggéra toutes les mesures qui furent prise docilement par le ministre presque sous la dictée du commissaire." No mention of Dupleix was made in the negotiation. The story of the English stipulation to recall Saunders and appoint a special commissioner to treat with Godeheu has been traced by M. Cultru to a rumour current in Paris, in 1755, reported to the King of Prussia by his ambassador. Godeheu ridiculed the idea. "Le Roi seul a prononcé votre rappel . . . ce n'était pas une affaire d'arrangement avec les Anglais." In the convention as finally executed, Saunders is styled "President for the Honourable English Company on the coast of Coromandel and Orixá, Governor of Fort St. George." Godeheu is styled "Commissary for His Most Christian Majesty, Commander-

General of all the settlements of the French Company on both sides the Cape of Good Hope, and at China, President of all the Councils there established, and Director-General of the India Company of France.” Orme, with his usual accuracy, states the fact that the admirers of Dupleix have ignored: “The French themselves were so fully convinced that Dupleix was not a man fit to be trusted with a commission which contradicted so strongly every part of his conduct since the beginning of the war of Coromandel that . . . they of their own accord, and without any application from the English Ministry, took the resolution of removing him from the Government of Pondicherry.”

Nor can Malleson’s contention be sustained that the French Directors were influenced by the constant defeats sustained round Trichinopoly.<sup>1</sup> The defeats of Astruc (26th June and 21st September 1753), Brenier (9th August 1753), and Mainville (9th December 1753) were certainly not known

<sup>1</sup> “But when they heard, first of Law’s disaster, then of the loss of de la Touche and his 700 men, then of the defeats in succession of Astruc, of Brenier, of Mainville, . . . they came at last to the determination to insist on a change of policy” (Dupleix, “Rulers of India Series”).

in Paris in August 1753, when Godeheu's deputation to India was decided on. M. Cultru shows that among the reasons for Dupleix's recall were his behaviour in regard to the jagirs, the arrogance of his letters to the Directors, and his concealment of important facts, to which Law's defeat in June 1752 formed the climax. But it was his conduct in respect to the jagirs that chiefly influenced the Directors. For twelve months, in January 1753, the Directors had been without dispatches from Pondicherry. The dispatches then received were silent as to the check received at Arcot in 1751, his receipt of the Nawabship of the Carnatic, and the reasons for the dispatch of Bussy to the Deccan.<sup>1</sup> For all that was most important for them to know, the Directors were dependent on letters from private individuals, and on the newspapers published in London and The Hague. If his recall had depended alone on the complaints of the English, he would certainly have been sent back to India on the out-

<sup>1</sup> "Voulant rester maître absolu de ses mouvements, Dupleix ne rendait compte de rien ; il n'écrivait pas au ministère ou ne correspondait avec lui qu'en termes généraux" (Saint Priest).



break of war between England and France, soon after his arrival in Europe.

In addition to these disquieting circumstances the affairs of the Company had become desperate. Since 1745 the Company had been practically insolvent. At that time, in fifteen months' war, twelve of their merchantmen, valued at 10,600,000 francs, had been captured or lost at sea. Nine millions were owing to the State for loans, yet the payment of dividends had not been suspended. Recourse was again had to the State. A large loan was sanctioned: fresh capital was raised by the issue of new shares, and for three years the dividends were paid out of the Royal Treasury. By 1750 the Company was in dire distress: in 1753 it was at the last gasp. The almost universal corruption existing in every branch of the Company's service was a potent factor in its ruin. There was no longer a question of making conquests in India: the doubt was whether the Company itself would continue to exist. Peace in India at any price was an absolute necessity, and, in view of his frequent disregard of the Directors' orders, peace could only be obtained by recalling Dupleix.

The Directors had been lavish in the dispatch of soldiers from France. In September 1750 they sent him 300 men; in 1751, 365 men; in 1752, 1381, of which 122 were lost in the *Prince*; in 1753 he received 600 out of 894 who were dispatched before Godeheu's departure from France.<sup>1</sup> Yet all this time they were kept in ignorance of what was going on in India.

Two years before, Godeheu had been named as the best available successor to Dupleix: he knew India, and was a man of integrity. Voltaire says that he was remarkable for prudence and mildness. According to his public instructions, he was given full powers to carry out a complete inquiry, and had discretion, if he saw fit, to continue the war. But, from Silhouette and the Minister for naval affairs he carried sealed instructions, of a very different nature. The immense riches acquired by Dupleix, Bussy, and others, it was said, had turned their heads. They talked of inciting the Soobadar to attack Mysore, where the booty was enormous. "Tout ne respire que guerre et brigandage. . . . Une des premières mesures à prendre

<sup>1</sup> Cultru.

est de faire repasser en France ceux dont les richesses immenses ne peuvent que bannir l'esprit de frugalité qui doit présider aux opérations d'une Compagnie marchande."

If Dupleix resisted Godeheu's orders, he and his relations were to be arrested. Godeheu was to restore to the English, unconditionally, the Swiss troops Dupleix had piratically taken prisoners at sea in 1752, and open negotiations for peace. He was further directed to land at Karikal, and summon Dupleix to meet him there, so as to preclude any chance of resistance; but this part of his instructions was not acted on. From the tenor of these instructions it is evident that resistance to the Company's authority was expected, not only from Dupleix but also from those who had enriched themselves under him, and the Directors were determined to make a clean sweep of them. The 2000 men sent with Godeheu were intended as much to coerce Dupleix, if necessary, as to protect French interests. To the French Directors it seemed a monstrous thing that their servants in the East had acquired enormous wealth and were ruling vast

territories in the name of the Company, while the Company itself was insolvent. It was not known in France that the riches acquired by Dupleix and his family, together with the revenues derived from the Carnatic, had been dissipated, that the troops were in arrears of pay, and there was no money in the Treasury.

Godeheu reached Pondicherry on the 1st August 1754, and landed on the following day. In a letter dated 1st August, he informed the Madras Council that he had arrived with full powers and authority. He stated his earnest desire to make peace between the Companies; he sent back to Madras the Swiss prisoners, in proof of good faith, and proposed a suspension of arms. It is a proof of his nervousness about the Swiss prisoners (whose numbers had dwindled to 80) that he should have written to notify their surrender, within an hour or two of his arrival, and before he put foot on shore. The matter was not one that brooked delay, as Watson's squadron might be looked for at any moment. In his reply to Dupleix's attack on him, Godeheu relates how a French officer, M. de

Dampierre, who was at Madras when Wátson arrived there, reported to him that Watson and Pocock complained of their hands being tied, as they had received orders to make reprisals on the French Company's vessels for the seizure of the troops "que vous aviez fait arrêter à leur passage de Madras au Fort St. David, quoique les deux nations fussent alors en pleine paix." Surgeon Ives in his narrative also says: "to our great surprise, instead of being employed on the objects of war, we had nothing to do but to look about us." So nearly had Dupleix involved France and England in war.

Dupleix was at once given to understand that his power was at an end, and that he and his family must return to France. So long as he remained in Pondicherry he was allowed to retain all the insignia of his Governorship and of his Nawabship, and to occupy the Governor's residence: in fact, Godeheu appears to have treated him with a consideration that was not appreciated by Dupleix. It is evident from Godeheu's *Mémoires* that he found the administration in great confusion; the Treasury was empty,

and the troops before Trichinopoly had mutinied for want of pay. When asked by Godeheu for money to pay the troops, Dupleix replied that he had been relying on the money brought out by Godeheu, and that if the ships had not arrived he would have pawned his plate. Unable to see that his policy was discredited, and that Godeheu was acting under superior orders, he urged him again and again to send troops to Trichinopoly,<sup>1</sup> and referred him to Papiapoullé for the Carnatic accounts. This Papiapoullé was the agent appointed by Dupleix, or rather Madame Dupleix, as M. Cultru surmises, to administer the Carnatic. According to Godeheu he had once been M. Barthelemy's valet, and was dismissed by him for bad behaviour. He was accountable only to Dupleix, and had been allowed to assume a position of authority second only to Dupleix himself. He robbed the districts in his charge, and played the tyrant everywhere. No Frenchman dared to oppose him for fear of being

<sup>1</sup> "Ce nouveau detachement . . . ramenera le courage de nos troupes, qui n'est pas fort assuré à la vue des Anglais" (Dupleix to Godeheu, 4th August 1754).

ruined : he raised troops, whom he kept without pay till they mutinied, and was detected by Godeheu giving orders to the native officers of sepoy in Pondicherry in defiance of those given by Godeheu himself. No single man had so great a share in the ruin of Dupleix's administration as Papia-poullé.<sup>1</sup>

Godeheu has been blamed for having concealed his instructions from Dupleix up to the moment of landing, for having displayed personal animosity, and for having made a sacrifice of French interests. But the French Directors had themselves designedly kept Dupleix in ignorance of their intentions when they announced the coming of Godeheu, in their distrust of Dupleix's loyalty, and Godeheu does not appear to have shown any personal feeling or unnecessary harshness in carrying out his orders. As one of the Directors, he knew how desperate was the state of the Company's finances, and his inquiry into the Carnatic accounts was necessarily stringent. He had been sent out as an inquisitor, not as a successor in the government of the French

<sup>1</sup> We should write the name Papiah Pillay.

Indies.<sup>1</sup> After the orders of the Directors for the surrender of the jagirs to the Company, he was not disposed to listen with much patience to Dupleix's plea that they were his own property. By a reversal of Dupleix's policy alone could war with England be avoided, and he knew what the English terms were. A suspension of arms for three months was agreed upon. On the 14th October, Dupleix sailed for France. In the last days of the year a conditional treaty was signed between the two Companies, subject to ratification in Europe. The only effect of the treaty was to produce a cessation of hostilities, and an interchange of prisoners, that left a balance of 650 French prisoners in the hands of the English. No surrender of territory was to take place without orders from Europe. It is altogether misleading to say, as Malleson has done, that the effect of the treaty was to undo all Dupleix's work.

While these things were taking place in India, opinion in France had partly veered round in favour of Dupleix. His

<sup>1</sup> He left India again in February 1755, six weeks after the conditional treaty was signed.



aims and achievements were beginning to gain favour in Court circles, while war with England appeared inevitable. A dispatch modifying Godeheu's orders was sent off, but arrived two months after Dupleix's departure.

His reception by the public in France was at first all that he could desire, and he looked forward to a speedy return to India. On his voyage he spent money lavishly at the Mauritius and the Cape of Good Hope, and in France he made a great display of wealth. But the Directors were less favourably inclined to him than the public, and the King's Ministers received him coldly. They had his insolent reply about the jagirs before them: they received before long, from Godeheu, a copy of the treaty of peace, based on their own suggestions, and, in some respects, more favourable than what they were prepared to accept: they learned from Godeheu the result of his inquiry into the Carnatic accounts, which showed an enormous deficit not accounted for; and Dupleix himself claimed over twelve millions of livres from the Company on account of his jagirs, and over seven millions of livres ad-

vanced from his private resources for public purposes. When called on to account for his possession of such a sum he stated that it was derived from his jagirs. But the Directors had refused to recognise his claim to the jagirs as they had refused to recognise Dumas' claim ; they knew that he had inherited nothing from his father, and that he had lost the fortune he had made in Bengal before he left Chandernagore. Godeheu had to report that the Carnatic was ruined, partly by the ravages of war, but in great measure by the tyranny and peculations of Madame Dupleix's agent ; that the native troops were unpaid, and were in a state of mutiny, so that he had been obliged to disband them. The fact was that Dupleix had expended the Carnatic revenues so far as they would go, and then his own fortune and the fortunes of his friends, in the war. So far back as October 1751 he had written to Bussy : "A peine les revenus de la province peuvent-ils fournir aux dépenses qu'occasionnent. Méhemet Ali et les Anglais. . . . Le pays est dévasté : le défaut de récoltes m'occasionne à moi des avances considérables. Il faut qu'il soit sorti de mon coffre plus de

dix lakhs de roupies depuis mai dernier sans qu'il puisse y en rentrer une seule." Yet at that date the sums advanced to Chunda Sahib had been repaid.

The reaction of public opinion in favour of Dupleix appears to have been brief. Cartwright quotes a letter from de Kerjean written in Paris the 6th February 1757: "I am at a loss to describe the extent to which La Bourdonnais' libels have here made an impression on people's minds, while Dupleix's memorials pass almost unnoticed."

Dupleix's admirers have laid much stress on the shameful conditions of Godeheu's treaty, and its disastrous results to France. The view is of too partisan a nature to be accepted. The French had not been victorious in the three years of unofficial war waged between the two Companies, and were in no condition to continue the struggle with hope of success. To the English at Madras the terms of the treaty appeared unjustifiable, in view of the great advantages it secured to the French; and it was only under orders from England that they were "obliged to conclude a truce on such pre-

carious and unequal terms.”<sup>1</sup> When Godeheu’s secretary uttered some platitudes on the hatefulness of the war, Saunders replied that the English had nothing to complain of in respect to it. Nine hundred French prisoners were in the hands of the English, while the French had only 250 English prisoners.<sup>2</sup> An English squadron was on the coast with a King’s regiment far superior in quality to the motley troops who had hitherto fought for the Company. “Both sides now were able to bring into the field an equal force of about 2000 Europeans: but the English troops were in quality so much superior to the French that if this long and obstinately contested war had now rested on the decision of the sword, there is no doubt but that the French would soon have been reduced to ask for peace on much less advantageous terms than the presidency of Madras were obliged to accede to, in obedience to the orders they had now received from Europe.”<sup>3</sup> Peace

<sup>1</sup> Orme.

<sup>2</sup> These numbers do not represent the whole of the prisoners captured during the war. There were many Swiss and Germans among them, many of whom took service with their captors.

<sup>3</sup> Orme.

was necessary to the French Company, and the price paid for it was actually extrême-ly small. The one serious concession made by the French Government was the recognition of Mahomed Ali as Nawab of the Carnatic. On this point the English were unyielding. Yet Mahomed Ali was not their nominee, but had been appointed by Nazir Jung. After Chunda Sahib's death Dupleix had been unable to find a satisfactory candidate for the throne of the Carnatic, and the indifference of the French to Salabut Jung's wishes was shown by the matter being finally settled without his being made a party to it. On the other hand, the position of Salabut Jung, Dupleix's nominee for the Deccan, was left unchanged, and Bussy, with a French army, was allowed to remain and dominate the Deccan. The English Directors formed a scheme for bringing pressure to bear on Salabut Jung to expel Bussy and the French troops, with the assistance of the Peishwa; and for this purpose Clive, with a body of troops, was sent to Bombay: but the scheme came to nothing. Eighteen months later Salabut Jung himself solicited the aid of the English to expel Bussy from the Deccan.

An expedition was prepared and was on the point of marching from Madras, when the news of the capture of Calcutta by Suraj-oo-dowla caused the expedition to be abandoned.

Meanwhile, all mention of Bussy was studiously kept out of the treaty. The territorial changes contemplated by the provisional treaty were never carried out, and the French remained in possession of extensive districts acquired during the war, yielding, according to Dupleix, a revenue of 2,679,457 rupees,<sup>1</sup> while the English held only lands yielding 800,000 rupees yearly, which Mahomed Ali had mortgaged to them for the expenses of the war, and which were open to redemption.<sup>2</sup> The solid advantages gained by Dupleix's policy were very great, and conferred on France a great initial superiority on the renewal of war two years later. The treaty, in fact, only established a state of armed truce between the Companies, and settled the contention as to Mahomed Ali's title. The removal of Dupleix from India was important to the English, and necessary

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoire pour Dupleix*. Pièce justificative, No. VI.

<sup>2</sup> Orme.

in the cause of peace, but that was a matter outside the treaty altogether.

The remainder of Dupleix's days were spent in vainly prosecuting his claims against the Company. His writings run into a prodigious length, which must have confused and wearied those who studied them.<sup>1</sup> Against Godeheu he made a violent personal attack, and the public were bombarded with a series of accusation and rejoinders, into which Maissin, Law, and others were drawn, to be followed before long by similar counter-charges between Lally and Bussy. He chose to assume that his recall from India and the composition with the English were solely due to Godeheu's bad faith and folly. But Godeheu was not a free agent in the matter: he acted strictly under orders from the French Ministry.

To the end of his life he believed that the capture of Trichinopoly would have put the crown to his political schemes, and one of his principal grievances against Godeheu was his failure to push operations with vigour on his arrival in India. But the time had

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoire contre la Compagnie*, 1759; 291 quarto pages. *Réponse à Godeheu*, 1763; 133 quarto pages.

long<sup>3</sup> passed, before Godeheu's appearance on the scene, when the quarrel with the English Company might have been ended on such terms. The issue had enlarged to dimensions that could not have been decided by the capture of a single fortress. From auxiliaries in the war the two nations had become principals: it had ceased to be a matter between the two Companies: it had brought France and England face to face. He entirely ignored the fact that the capture of Trichinopoly,<sup>1</sup> if it had been accomplished by Godeheu, would not have settled the matter, and must have entailed open war between England and France. The convention was, in fact, beneficial to France, as it gave time for the recuperation of the exhausted provinces, while not a foot of land was surrendered.

Exaggerated as his private claims almost certainly were, an examination of them would have shown large sums due to him and to his friends who had advanced money for public purposes. But neither the French Company nor the French Government had money to

<sup>1</sup> Bussy did not hesitate to call his obsession as to Trichinopoly a 'chimera.'



spare for such a purpose. Dupleix commenced a lawsuit against the Company: the French Ministry interfered and put a stop to the proceedings. At the same time they gave Dupleix letters of protection against his own creditors.<sup>1</sup> His *Mémoire contre la Compagnie* in 1759 must have fallen on deaf ears in that year of universal calamity for France. In November 1756 Madame Dupleix died. Two years after her death Dupleix married Mademoiselle de Chastenay Lanty, a lady of good family but without fortune, by whom he left one daughter.<sup>2</sup> On the 11th November 1763 he died.

Long before this he had seen the final ruin of his work. In January 1761 Pondicherry surrendered to the English, and all prospect of French empire in India vanished. But he could see in it only the handiwork of Godeheu. Some months before his death he wrote: "J'ai sacrifié ma jeunesse, ma fortune, ma vie, à combler d'honneurs et de richesses ma nation en Asie; un homme envieux arrive, la voit dans cet état de splendeur, et la fait tomber dans le mépris

<sup>1</sup> The protection appears to have been withdrawn some years later.

<sup>2</sup> She married the Marquis de Valory.

et dans l'abaissement, etc." <sup>1</sup> But it was France, not Godeheu, that had failed; in India as in America. Dupleix himself could not have altered the result, though he might have prolonged the struggle. The ruin that had been impending over the Compagnie des Indes for fifteen years was at last accomplished. It is small wonder that, at such a moment, men were more ready to condemn his errors than to remember his first successes.

On his arrival in France he had been in affluent circumstances. Before he left Bengal he had remitted considerable sums to France; he had purchased an estate in 1752, and, from 1755 to 1759, he was allowed to retain jagirs in India that brought him an income of not less than 300,000 rupees a year.<sup>2</sup> But with the withdrawal of the protection from his creditors, and the cessation of his Indian incomes, his money troubles began, and the last few months of his life were months of despairing poverty. Four years after his death there was a sale of his jewels for the

<sup>1</sup> Réponse du Sieur Dupleix à la lettre du Sieur Godeheu, 30th October 1763.

<sup>2</sup> Cultru, p. 345.

benefit of his creditors. Among them were a quantity of unset pearls, diamonds,<sup>1</sup> and other precious stones, diadems, aigrettes, gold chains, jewelled sabres and poniards, a box set with rubies and emeralds, etc.<sup>1</sup>

\* French national pride has been flattered by the idea that if Dupleix had had better troops, and if he had been better supported by the French Government, his policy would have triumphed. It is difficult to see how this contention can be justified. It is apparently based on the supposition that the success of French arms in the Carnatic would have been acquiesced in by the British Government. But the British Government had shown that they would support the East India Company even at the cost of war, and there is no reason to suppose that the issue would have been different in 1755 from what it was six years later. When Lally landed in India, in 1758, he was relatively stronger than Dupleix had been at any time since 1752. But he failed to take Madras, and had to surrender Pondicherry: while, in the Northern Circars, the French suffered a crushing defeat. So

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

long as the English had the superiority at sea, French predominance in India was impossible.

The frailty of the foundations on which Dupleix's schemes had been built is exemplified by Bussy's career at the Deccan Court. For five years he was the successful arbiter of Deccan politics, making peace or war in the Soobadar's name. In the summer of 1756 he succumbed to local intrigues, and was forced to fight his way back to the coast: and so French influence in the Deccan came to its end for a time.

The soldiers sent out to India from France were no doubt bad. But so were the men sent out from England. The complaints of Orme and Clive place the matter beyond doubt. Yet there was good fighting material among the French. The men who, at Bahoor, two months after Law's surrender, met Lawrence's grenadiers bayonet to bayonet, could not have been bad soldiers. Granting the inferior quality of his men, as represented by Dupleix, it may well be asked, why, after Law's surrender, he continued to rely upon them, in preference to listening to the frequent overtures for peace

made to him by the English and Mahomed Ali, whereby he would have retained everything of importance that he was fighting for. It was in officers rather than in men that Dupleix failed, and for this Dupleix himself was largely responsible. Many of his selections for command had no recommendation beyond their relationship to himself or to his wife. Bussy, the best of them, was engaged to marry one of Madame Dupleix's daughters : and Bussy was not employed in the field against the English. In numbers the European troops at his disposal always exceeded those that the English could bring into the field. The retention of Bussy in the Deccan was a cardinal error. Had the troops with him been employed in the Carnatic they would probably have turned the scale at Trichinopoly. Nobody knew better than Dupleix how little worthy of consideration was the Moghul claim to sovereignty in Southern India, but he failed to see the equal worthlessness of the Deccan Soobadar's claim to sovereignty over the Carnatic so long as it could not be made good by force of arms. The real issue lay in the Carnatic, and the English, with true

insight, saw this. When Godeheu's treaty was made, the recognition of Mahomed Ali as Nawab of the Carnatic was insisted on : but Bussy was left undisturbed in the Deccan to be otherwise dealt with, and subsequent events showed that his presence there was of little importance. His warfare in the Deccan has been treated as part of Dupleix's policy. It is difficult to admit this view. Bussy's operations were confined to maintaining the Soobadar against the Mahrattas ; but they had not the least influence on Carnatic affairs, or on the war with the English. Bussy and his men in the Deccan were only mercenaries at the disposal of the Soobadar, to be employed by him for local purposes.

In estimating Dupleix's position as a statesman it is impossible to overlook his failure in promoting the commercial interests of the French Company. Yet his admirers assert that the first measures in his supposed plan for establishing French sovereignty in India was the improvement of French administration and of the Company's finances. That he understood Eastern trade was shown by his work at Chandernagore ; but, from the

time of the capture of Madras by La Bourdonnais, he ceased to concern himself about administrative affairs, and staked everything on the success of his political schemes. The mistake was one that might have been committed by a successful soldier; but Dupleix was emphatically not a soldier, and he was a very capable administrator. He built nothing; he consolidated nothing. He raised the scaffolding of an immense political edifice, and was constantly extending it; but not a single course of masonry was laid or even projected by him. The ease with which native armies were overthrown by his troops, and the favourable way in which events played into his hands for a time, deprived him of all sense of proportion and of the difficult problems that remained to be solved. And so it came to pass that when the order for his recall arrived, his treasury was empty, his soldiers were mutinous for want of pay, the provinces he had pretended to administer were ruined, and his own fortune had been swallowed up. By his arrogance he had alienated the goodwill of his subordinates, and by his insubordination and neglect of the Company's commercial in-

terests he had incurred the hostility of the directors whose support was essential to him. The insolvency of the Company was a powerful factor in his ruin. Had he not been recalled, it is difficult to avoid the belief that a few more months would have seen the failure of all he had projected, even if open war between France and England had been avoided; for it is impossible to maintain that the French position in the Carnatic was as strong at the end of 1754 as it had been when Salabut Jung was placed on the throne of the Deccan.

Yet Dupleix must ever remain one of the most remarkable figures in our Indian history. With astonishing audacity and temporary success he was the first to show the practical possibility of European dominion in India, and there can be little doubt that Clive's policy after Plassey was founded on the example set by him. That he set out on his career of political adventure without any definite aim is made clear from his own letters. He did not create opportunities: he seized them as they presented themselves. At each turn of the kaleidoscope his ambition grew and his horizon of possibilities enlarged,



till nothing less than universal dominion in India seemed attainable. But if he is to be given credit for his first successes, so also must he himself bear the blame for his failures. Nevertheless, our fullest admiration is due to the greatness of his aims, his energy, his political dexterity, his unfailing fortitude under misfortune, and his tenacity of purpose. At this distance of time we may re-echo the words of Orme: "His conduct certainly merited a very different requital from his nation, which never had a subject so desirous and capable of extending its reputation and power in the East Indies."

The embarrassment caused us by Dupleix for a time, was really a blessing in disguise. He taught the English in India to know their own strength. Till then they had relied on the Crown to do their fighting for them. In the four years' warfare to which they were unexpectedly committed, the East India Company and their servants in India were thrown on their own resources, and discovered that they too possessed soldiers and statesmen equal to all emergencies. But for Dupleix, the genius of Clive and the military virtues of Lawrence might have never been

discovered. But for Dupleix, there would have been no British squadron in the Indian seas, no King's regiment in India when English trade was extinguished in Bengal in 1756. As the storm that wrecked La Bourdonnais' ships in 1746 gave Dupleix the troops to embark on his career of conquest, so the political storm raised by him gave the English the armed force that enabled them to conquer at Plassey, and strike for empire at the psychological moment, and brought to India the men whose names are imperishably written in our Indian records from 1754 to 1765. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the results wrought by Watson's squadron and the officers and men of the 39th that he took out with him. It was solely owing to Dupleix that they left England.

To believe that Dupleix, if properly supported in France, would have succeeded in founding a French empire in India, is to misread history. All French efforts at colonisation in the eighteenth century were paralysed by quarrels among the local officials, and by the sacrifice of public interests to the acquisition of private gains. Voltaire

compared the French settlement in Southern India during the Seven Years' War<sup>6</sup> to a dying man whose effects are pillaged by his servants before the breath has left his body. These evils were rampant among the French in India when Dupleix was at the head of affairs, and their results were as fatal to French interests in India as they were in Canada. The verdict on French colonisation given by the Seven Years' War would not have been reversed by the temporary success of Dupleix.

# APPENDIX

## OFFICIAL ACCOUNT OF THE SALE OF DUPLEIX'S JEWELS AFTER HIS DEATH, TO SATISFY HIS HEIRS, CREDITORS, AND OTHER CLAIMANTS

*Archives du département de Seine et Oise,*  
No. 3761.E.

(1) Par ordre du Conseil d'Etat du 17 Mars 1764, pour juger en dernier ressort les contestations nées ou à naître contre la dame Veuve Du Pleix, la succession héritiers et creanciers debiteurs et pretendants droit à la succession du Sieur Joseph François Du Pleix Commandant sous le Roi dans les Indes ;

(2) Le dit Jugement rendu le 17 août présent mois ;

(3) Commandement au Sieur Jacquard Marin Ecuyer, Conseiller Secrétaire du Roy de remettre en nos mains les objets suivans (dont description détaillée).

- (4)
- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 1. boîte et son couvercle et une coupe garnie de diamants et rubis perles d'émeraudes et autre pierres prisé (estimé) | 11,000 livres |
| 2. Manche de jade garni de Rubis et émeraudes prisé . . . . .   | 400 „         |
| 18. Aigrette garnie de 34 Diamants prisé . . . . .  | 260 „         |
| 22. Aigrette garnie de diamants Rubis et émeraudes prisé . . . . .  | 260 „         |
| 23. Aigrette garnie de diamants Rubis et émeraudes prisé . . . . .  | 260 „         |
| 34. Diadème garnie de diamants et émeraudes prisé . . . . .   | 650 „         |

38.	Aigrette garnie de diamants rubis émeraudes prisé . . . . .	47 <sup>e</sup> livres
39.	Diadème garnie de diamants rubis émeraudes prisé . . . . .	1,500 „
50.	2 boutons de Ceinture d'or garni de rubis et diamants et émeraudes . . . . .	1,220 „
54.	5 chaines d'or garnis d'appliques en rubis, de petits diamants prisé	3,900 „
56.	Gand de peau bordé de semences de perles et de 2 glands attaches garnies de Diamants rubis émeraudes . . . . .	600 „
59.	3 Chaines d'or prisées . . . . .	840 „
61.	Collier de perles et Mosaiques et Agraffe de diamant prisé. . . . .	1,000 „
65.	9 petits paquets de Topazes d'Inde . . . . .	240 „
68.	4 fils de perles prisé . . . . .	1,000 „
70.	2 bracelets garnis de rubis et diamants . . . . .	520 „
73.	Collier garni de diamants, rubis et perles prisé. . . . .	1,110 „
75.	fils de perles prisé . . . . .	2,000 „
84.	4 cercles de bracelets d'Or et Rubis . . . . .	550 „
(?)	un Sabre garni de diamants et fourreau et couteau à manche garni de diamants prisé à . . . . .	12,900 „
10.	Aigrette garnie de diamants et émeraudes prisé à . . . . .	300 „
12.	Manche de poignard de Jade, rubis et émeraudes prisé à . . . . .	300 „
33.	Diadème garni de rubis émeraudes et diamants prisé . . . . .	390 „
43.	Applique en diadème et diamants perle prisé . . . . .	220 „
44.	Diadème et garniture prisé. . . . .	420 „
45.	„ en cœur garni prisé . . . . .	270 „

46.	Diadème forme corbeille prisé .	580	livres
47.	„ applique (milieu manque)	340	„
51.	Aigrette en grappe prisé . . .	100	„
52.	Doitier d'or garni . . . . .	320	„
57.	2 bracelets de Diamants . . .	580	„
58.	Joyau de poitrine garni Diamants		
	Rubis . . . . .	120	„
69.	Émeraude ronde . . . . .	1,300	„
72.	Bouquet de 6 roses de diamants		
	émeraudes rubis . . . . .	520	„
76.	500 perles enfilées bracelets (516		
	perles trouvées) . . . . .	1,000	„
77.	388 perles (346 trouvées seule-		
	ment) . . . . .	1,200	„
(?)	plus bague gros diamant : . .	20,000	„
3.	Croix Ordre St. Michel Diamants, etc.	2,400	„
14.	boucle de col 14 diamants . . .	1,800	„
75.	2 filés de perles rondes . . .	1,600	„

Fo. 55. Vente de Diamants perles et bijoux dans une des Salles des Grands Augustins Mercredi prochain 2 Septembre 1767 et jours suivants. Detail de la vente et produit d'adjudication à la page suivante.

Fo.	Date de Vente.	No. Ci dessus.	Mise à prix.	Description.	Adjugé.	Observations.
	2 Sept.	65		23 Topazes	36	
		18	200	Aigrette 34 diamants	livres.	retirée de la vente pas d'acheteur à sa valeur — p o u r mémoire.
		23	150			„ „

Fo.	Date de Vente.	No. Ci dessus.	Mise à prix.	Description.	Adjugé.	Observations.
e	Jeudi 3 Sept.	34	600		700	retirée pour mémoire.
		39	1,200			
		68	500		1,161	Mémoire retirée.
		55	500		712	
		54	1,500			
		70	400		521	
		84	300		561	
		73	800			Mémoire. Mémoire.
		59	700			
		50	900		1,361	Mémoire. Mémoire.
		75	1,500		2,000	
		61	700	moins l'agraffe	1,001	
		61	300	agrafe seul	637	
		65	12	Topazes	45	
		59	800		875	
		54	800	2 chaines		
		38	350			
		(?)		Manche de Jade	400	
		1	10,000	boite et couvercle	11,070	
		76	800		1,061	
		43	200		501	
		69	300		227	
		72	400		321	
		51	100		130	
	Vendredi 4 Sept.	65	24	45 topazes	31	Mémoire.
		65	12	7 „		
		65	24	46 „	33	

Fo.	Date de Vente.	No. Ci dessus.	Mise à prix.	Description.	Adjugé.	Observations.
		52	300			Mémoire.
		58	100		120	
		57	500		620	
		47	300		381	
		3	2,000	Croix St. Michel		Mémoire.
		14	1,400		1,920	
		44	400		490	
		45	200		320	
		74	1,400		1,700	
		12	250	manche poignard		Mémoire.
		33	400		480	
		10	200	Diadème	320	
		46	100		584	
	partie de Samedi 5 Sept.	54	550		951	
		65	27	6 topazes	31	
		65	36	4 „	43	
		65	20	1 topaze	23	
		(?)	300	doitier émaillé d'or	341	
			260	Aigrette	400	
				34 diamants		
		22	200	„	280	
		23	240	„	281	
		38	450	„	526	
		12	200	manche poignard		Mémoire.
		39	400	diadème		Mémoire.
	partie de	77	1,200	2 bracelets	1,300	
		54	616	Chaine d'or	680	
	„	54	1,100	„ „	1,199	



Fo.	Date de Vente.	No. Ci dessus.	Mise à prix.	Description.	Adjugé.	Observations.
117	Samedi 5 Sept. (suite)					
	partie de	54	700	Chaine d'or	721	
		73	1,100	Collier diamants	1,150	
	Lundi 7 Sept.					
	partie	65	9	5 petites topazes	1110 sols.	
	„	65	6	7 „	11	
	„	65	10	4 „	12	
	„	65	12	4 „	151 sol.	
		12	200	Manche de poignard	0	Mémoire.
		39 (?)	2,000	Croix St. Michel		Mémoire. Mémoire.

Lundi 7 Sept. 1767 à 10h. du matin Mr. Corbet Avocat en Parlement avait remis au Sequestre du Sieur Duplex 8000 livres montant et produit des deux derniers vacations.

9 Septembre.

Sabre 12,000 vendu 15,001 livres à Mr. Poiret Md. Joaillier.

Exposition des Nos. 3, 11, 39—sans résultat.

10 Septembre.

Mr. Corbet verse, 15,020 livres.

Vendredi, 11 Septembre.

Manche poignard, No. 12, 200 livres, Mémoire.

„ 39, 500 livres, Mémoire.

No. 3, Croix de St. Michel  
Mémoire.

partie 54, Chaîne d'or 500 livres  
adjudée 522.

Bague No. 78, 17,700 livres adjudée 20,700 livres à  
Antreand Joaillier, Paris, Rue St. Louis.

Mr. Corbet Huissier, ordinaire du Conseil d'Etat  
verse 20,000 livres, dont décharge.

Fo. 140. Des Jugements de MM. les Commissaires du  
Conseil députés pour Sa Majesté etc. etc.

Dans ladite succession somme de 15,630 livres pour  
être mise dans le coffre dont acte fait aux même jour et  
an que ci dessus.

Fo. 144. 8,000 livres versées au Maitre du Sequestre,  
etc.

15,020 livres versées au Maitre du Sequestre,  
etc.

12 Sept. 20,000 livres versées au Maitre du Sequestre,  
etc.

149. Mlle. Dupleix seule habile à se dire et porter  
heritière du Sr. Dupleix son père et attendu que les  
objets détaillés dans ladite requête lesquels sont d'abord  
une croix de l'ordre de St. Michel enrichie de brillants,  
un manche de poignard de jade garni de rubis et enfin  
un diadème rubis et émeraudes faisant les Nos. 3, 12, et  
39 de l'estimation faite par les Sieurs Marin et l'Empereur  
ont été exposés en différentes fois en vente sans que  
personne les ait encheris à la somme à laquelle ils ont  
été estimés les autorisent à vendre les dits trois objets au  
dessous de la dite estimation Nos. 3, 12, 39, et incessam-  
ment procéder à la vente.

Fo. 154. Fille mineure Dlle. Adelaide Louise Jeanne  
Josephine Du Pleix sa fille mineure heritière de son  
père et Louis d'Estournelles en nom et comme tuteur de  
ladite demoiselle.

29 Janvier 1768 vente annoncée.

3 Mars 1768 vente à la salle des Grands Augustins  
à savoir.

Manche de poignard 100 livres adjudé au Sieur Doris

Md. Joaillier Quai Amorfondier pour 175 livres  
3 sols.

Diadème prisé 700 livres adjudé au Sr. Lefevre Md.  
Joaillier 852 livres.

Croix St. Michel prisé 1500 livres adjudé au Sieur  
Le Cocq Md. Orfevre à Paris Rue du Harlay  
pour 1650 livres 3 sols.

(Signé) CORBET.

18 Avril 1768 M. Corbet verse 3310 livres 14 sols  
déduction faite des frais.

Dont acte fait et passé. Décharge etc. etc.

(Signé) CORBET.